



<b>Title</b>	<b>Public participation in urban renewal in Hong Kong</b>
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<b>Citation</b>	
<b>Issued Date</b>	<b>2006</b>
<b>URL</b>	<b><a href="http://hdl.handle.net/10722/48895">http://hdl.handle.net/10722/48895</a></b>
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**THE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG**

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN URBAN RENEWAL**

**IN**

**HONG KONG**

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO**

**FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE**

**IN CANDIDACY FOR**

**THE DEGREE OF**

**BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN SURVEYING**

**DEPARTMENT OF REAL ESTATE AND CONSTRUCTION**

**BY**

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**APRIL 2006**

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## **Abstract**

The concept of community participation has become a main issue in Hong Kong. It is gaining more and more attention in recent years because the public is more and more aware of their own rights in participation in policy making process. With the rising force of NGOs (non-government organizations) and residents themselves, there is an outcry for genuine participatory means.

Regarding urban renewal, public participation is a very vital criterion. It is because urban renewal directly affects the community living and working in the area. Whether the renewal project is successful or not depends much on the satisfaction of the local community.

An increasing portion of the society holds positive view for the benefits brought about by public participation. Yet, is every party in the society holding the same attitude and perspective towards 'effective' participatory means? There exists dilemma. What the public demands is always not it gets.

URA has adopted a lot of approaches to enhance public participation. Community

workshops, District Advisory Groups and Community Aspiration Survey are all new approaches by URA. Are they effective? Are the residents really willing to play an active role to participate?

This dissertation tries to answer the two questions.



## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to express my greatest gratitude and my most sincere vote of thanks and respect to my supervisor, Dr. Anita M. M. Liu. Without her continuous encouragement, inspiration and guidance, this dissertation would not be prepared smoothly throughout the whole period of time.

Enormous debt is also owed to the three interviewees, namely Mr William Wan from Urban Renewal Authority, Mr Tony Lau from Housing Society and Mr Chan Wah Yu from Kwun Tong District Council. Without their assistance, there would not be such invaluable information for the smooth preparation of this research. I would also like to thank the respondents in Kwun Tong, who kindly spared their precious time to fill out the questionnaires.

Finally, I would like to grasp this opportunity to express my appreciation and gratitude to the support and encouragement from my family, my classmates, dear studio group mates, friends, and not to mention Anita and Lily, my two ‘alliances’.

## **Declaration**

I declare that this dissertation represents my own work, except where due acknowledgement is made, and that it has not been previously included in a thesis, dissertation or report submitted to this University or to any other institution for a degree diploma or other qualification.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## **List of Abbreviations**

TPB	Town Planning Board
LDC	Land Development Corporation
URA	Urban Renewal Authority
NGO	Non-Government Organizations
DAC	District Advisory Committee
DB	District Board
LRO	Land Resumption Ordinance
SPL	Secretary for Land and Works
URS	Urban Renewal Strategy
PLB	Planning and Lands Bureau
HS	Housing Society
WAI	Weighted Average Index

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# **Chapter 1**

## **Introduction**

Following the emergence of a lot of modern tall buildings in recent years in Hong Kong, there are many parts of the urban renewal which are dilapidated awaiting urban renewal. When it comes to urban renewal, conflicts would certainly arise because there would be disruption to the society especially to the owners of the properties to be demolished and renewed.

The Urban Renewal Authority (URA) was established on 1 May 2001 to supersede the Land Development Corporation (LDC). URA is entrusted with an enormous task of implementing a 20-year renewal programme, consisting of 200 new projects and 25 uncompleted LDC projects.

URA has the mission of creating quality and vibrant urban living in Hong Kong. People-oriented approach is used. Significantly, its land development procedure is different from LDC's with a higher transparency for the public. The URA places a

high priority on balancing the interests and needs of all segments of the urban community affected by the process of urban renewal. The views of local people are sought through different means such as direct communication with residents, professional bodies, academics, NGOs, Legislative Councilors, District Councilors, property, businesses, and stakeholder representatives. The most important medium is the direct communication with the local residents.

In fact, the objective of urban renewal is not just to demolish the dilapidated buildings and replace with new ones. The ultimate goal is to achieve long term sustainability, which would be further elaborated in the literature review. We aim to plan more comprehensively the overall environment of the old areas.

Community participation is a must because the residents are the one directly affected by the shortcomings arise because of the ageing of buildings and benefited after the renewal. With their participation, conflicts can be avoided between them, URA and different parties. Furthermore, they own the most knowledge about the district, which is much useful to better results of the renewal projects. URA has been trying to incorporate measures to enhance public participation in renewal projects.



In this research, the current participatory situation is investigated. It is vital to examine whether the measures launched by URA are effective and whether the residents have the intention to participate.

## Objectives of the Study

The objective of this paper is stated as follows:

Objective 1 Find out whether the residents within a renewal project have the intention to participate in the planning stage of renewal process.

Objective 2 Investigate if the current approaches by URA are effective means to enhance public participation

## **Chapter 2**

### **Methodology**

#### **2.1 Study Approach**

The extent of community participation in urban renewal in Hong Kong is to be examined. The focus would be on the pre-renewal stages, including the public consultation and planning stage. This focus is made after the investigation of the main difference between LDC and URA in Chapter 7. The main improvement of URA in the participatory aspect lies on the pre-renewal planning and consultation stage. It is achieved by investigations from two main channels. Our concentration lies on the competing force between the Social System and the Institutional System in the Competing Values Model mentioned in the literature review in Chapter 4.

The first channel concentrates on the Social System of the Competing Values Model mentioned in the literature review part. It focuses on citizens, who are the target participants in public participation. This is to be done by questionnaires. Interviews with non-government organizations (NGOs) are to be carried out as cross-validation

with the information got from questionnaires.

Another channel is to have interviews with officers of URA. It is for getting a clear picture of how the present participatory situation is like, from the major, and the only participant of the Institutional System.

## 2.2 Objectives

Two objectives are set in this dissertation research.

1. Find out whether the residents directly affected by Kwun Tong Town Centre Project have the intention to participate in the planning stage of renewal process.
2. Investigate if the current approaches by URA are effective means to enhance public participation

In all, we aim to opt for ways to achieve a better participatory situation and sort out the present situation, with reference to the ‘amended Johari Window based on the case of Public Participation’. Details are to be mentioned in Chapter 5.

### 2.3 Methodology for the Objectives

Objective 1, which is to find out if the residents have the intention to participate, is mainly done by questionnaires distributed to the directly affected parties. By ‘directly affected’, it means residents who are living in properties in Kwun Tong that would be resumed by URA, and excluding those living in adjoining areas. The questionnaires are set with reference to current URA participatory approaches, with information got from both URA website and interviews with URA official.

In addition, questions are set relating to Literature. Theoretical concepts act as the foundation to set questions in order to investigate if the respondents have the intention to participate. This part, at the same time, provides hindsight for recommendation to better participatory measures in the future.

Objective 2, which is to investigate if the current participatory approaches by URA are effective means, are carried out by investigating if the target residents find the approaches fulfilling certain aims or not. As for those aims and some features of effective participatory means, literature is referred to. Again, questionnaires are the main way of doing so. As for this part of the questionnaire, only directly affected

residents living in resumed properties in Kwun Tong Town Centre Project are to be asked since this part concentrates on the satisfaction level of them for URA current participatory approaches.

## 2.4 Qualitative Approach

This dissertation adopts the qualitative approach mainly. Qualitative approach seeks to get insights and to understand people's perceptions of 'the world' (Fellows & Liu, 2003). The beliefs and views of people are investigated. The objectivity of qualitative data is questioned. Analyses of the data are mainly by a lot of filtering, sorting and a certain degree of 'manipulations'.

In this empirical work, participation is a social phenomenon involving certain degree of subjective observation and judgment. To avoid bias, literature is used as the basis of the research. Theories and models relating to public participation are found, to aid our investigation into public participation in the urban renewal process of Hong Kong.

Qualitative data from opinion surveys are also adopted in this dissertation. The data

are to be inferred by relating to literature.

## 2.5 Case Study Approach

Yin (1994) suggests case studies as the preferred strategy when ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions are being posed, and the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context, but which cannot be manipulated. As this dissertation is about the public participation in urban renewal of Hong Kong, which is definitely a social contemporary phenomenon, case study approach is employed to investigate ‘how’ the public participation is currently. Direct observation and systematic interviewing are required.

### What is a Case Study?

It is essential to make the answer to the above question clear before setting off the case study approach.

According to Yin (1994), a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the

boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, with the focus on contextual conditions.

The approach benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis. It is a strategy comprising an all-encompassing method, involving the logic of design incorporating specific approaches to data collection and to data analysis. It is thus a comprehensive research strategy.

#### Common Criticism of Case Study Approach

How can generalization be done from just a single case? In fact, case studies, like experiments, are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universe, according to Yin (1994). It never represents a 'sample'. The goal, rather, is to expand and generalize theories. This dissertation aims to see how the literature and theories apply to real life situation and explain for the situation in Hong Kong.

#### Unit of Analysis

No issue is more important than defining the unit of analysis (Yin, 1993). It is set in order to make the boundary of our case study clear. It is related to the way the initial

research questions have been defined.

In this dissertation, the research question to be explored is the public participation situation in the urban renewal process of Hong Kong. It is a question of 'how'. The target case is Kwun Tong Town Centre Project announced by URA in 2005. The unit of analysis is the citizens living in the affected area.

#### The Verbal Data Dimension of Case Study Approach

Gillham (2001) puts the different forms of verbal data into a 'continuum' scale, illustrating how the two main methods, interview and questionnaires, are like on the scale.

Figure 1 The Verbal Data Dimension



Unstructured ← → Structured						
Listening to others' conversation; a kind of verbal observation	Using 'natural' conversation to ask research questions	'Open-ended' interviews; just a few key open questions	Semi-structured interviews, with open-and closed questions	Recording schedule verbally administered questionnaires	Semi-structured questionnaires: open-ended questions and with choices	Structured questionnaires, simple close ended questions

Source: Gillham, B. (2001) *Case Study Research Methods*,

This dimension sums up all the evidence gathering means of this case study. Yet, interviews tend to be unstructured, with the focus to the left of the dimension while questionnaires are structured, focusing to the right direction.

## 2.6 Case Study – Kwun Tong Town Centre

The Kwun Tong Town Centre Project is one of the redevelopment projects announced but not yet commenced by the LDC in 1998. One of the major reasons making it the case to be studied is that it is a multi-billion-dollar project, being the largest single project undertaken by the URA affecting about, 1600 property interests and about 5,000 people. At present, it is still in the pre-resumption stage, with consultation with the public ongoing. Because of the large scale and complexity

involved, the URA emphasizes on local community participation much and would try to make sure the important stakeholders are fully taken into consideration in the project planning process.

The analysis of the LDC and URA renewal process is done in Chapter 7. Obviously, the URA seeks to have improvement comparing with the LDC in the aspect of public participation. It is hoped that the public can have more means to have 'real' participation, meaning that their opinions can really cause effect to the final decision. The ugliest complain about the LDC's renewal process was that there was nearly none done in order to have the public participating in the planning process. According to Chan and Chow (1996), there was but no means for the public to have their say in the planning process of LDC.

The URA does have amendments in its renewal process, as a kind of rectification. The public can lodge complaints to the URA about the plan if they do not feel satisfied with. The focus of this dissertation research lies on the participation situation mainly in the planning, consultation and decision-making process, instead of the resumption and renewal period. It is because the latter procedures are just the 'outcome'. 'Real participation' ought to start with the very beginning, in order to

affect the 'outcome'.

Added to Kwun Tong Town Centre Project's large scale, it is still in its preliminary stage in the whole urban renewal process. The URA is taking a number of new measures to promote the public participation within the area. For instance, massive workshops are carried out in the district in order to gather the public's views.

## 2.7 Single-Case Design

Kwun Tong Town Centre Project is such a critical development of URA, which is used to test the well-formulated theories stated in the literature review. According to Yin (1994), the literature has specified a clear set of propositions as well as the circumstances within which the propositions are believed to be true, bringing about the condition which is suitable for carrying out single-case study.

### Embedded Single-Case Design

The embedded approach is employed, with the unit of analysis being the affected residents in Kwun Tong. Attention is also given to subunits of the whole urban

renewal progress, which include indirectly involved one such as officials from URA and Kwun Tong District Board officers in order to carry out cross-validation of the views. This is because public participation is a kind of empirical and social phenomenon, requiring views from different parties in order to get a more accurate picture.

To avoid attention shifted to subunits, which is a common pitfall of employing embedded design (Yin, 1994), extensive care would be put to focus the information got from the parties to the crux of public participation in the preliminary stage of urban renewal.

## 2.8 Method of Analysis

### General Analytic Strategy

The overall general strategy employed is relying on theoretical propositions (Yin, 1994). The theoretical propositions stated in literature review help shape the entire case study plan. The data found from the case would be related to theories stated in the review part. Theoretical propositions about casual relations-answers to 'how' and

‘why’ questions- can be very useful in guiding our case study analysis.

### Dominant Modes of Analysis

Pattern-matching is the logic behind our analysis of findings. Such a logic, according to Yin (1994), compares an empirically based pattern with a predicted one. Provided that the patterns coincide, the results can help a case study strengthen its internal validity.

### Formation of Hypothesis

The theoretical models suggested in Literature Review, namely ‘Orbits of Participation’, ‘Arnstein’s Ladder of Citizen Participation’, Yap’s concept and the ‘Johari Window’ and so on, provide us with insights. Based on them, we have the criteria to investigate the situation and extent of community participation in the renewal process. Further, three hypotheses are formulated to investigate into the extent of community participation of urban renewal in Hong Kong. They are then tested by the case study. They are:

Hypothesis 1: The community places individual preference ahead of communal goals.

Hypothesis 2: The community has a passive attitude towards participation in the renewal process and there is a low intention to participate.

Hypothesis 3: The community lacks the abilities to participate and to act.

## 2.10 Questionnaire

Questionnaires are distributed to the community living and working within the affected area of the Kwun Tong Town Centre Project, which is the target area of research, to get a further insight into the real extent of public participation of the renewal project. It is noted that the target is the directly affected residents, but not those living in adjoining areas.

Objectives of the questionnaire:

1. To investigate if the residents living within the area of Kwun Town Town

Centre Project have the intention to participate in the planning stage of renewal.

2. To investigate if the current approaches carried out by URA to enhance public participation are effective means.
3. To search for a clearer direction of how the future participatory approaches can be improved.

### 2.11 Structure of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire is divided into 3 parts.

**Part One** is about the realization of URA's participatory measures. From numerous kinds of evidence, including documents and interviews with URA official, certain measures are to be cross-validated for their taking place in reality. There are in total five participatory approaches concluded from the above different kinds of evidence.

This is done by directly making reference to affected residents living within the Kwun Tong Town Centre Project. They are asked if they have heard of the measures or not. This part echoes Research Objective 2, to see if the approaches are effective.

Knowing whether the citizens know about the approaches is the very first step.

**The second part of Part One** is for Research Objective 2 as well, to see if the approaches are effective. Respondents are asked to tick whether the five approaches are very effective, effective, moderate, having little effect, or no effect. To get a more reliable picture of the real situation, asking them directly in such a way should not be the only means to assess if the approaches are effective or not. Thus, questions are also set with reference to Literature Review on the features of good participatory measures suggested by Sanoff (2000), Darke (2000), Syme (1992) and Hampton (1997). Respondents are asked if the features are present in the reality by showing the level of agreeing or not to statements given.

**Part Two** is for investigating the Learning Objective One, which is to find out if the respondents have the intention to participate in the planning stage of renewal. Questions in this part are set mainly by making reference to information got from interviews with URA official and Kwun Tong District Councilor. Respondents are asked to choose whether they strongly agree, agree, being neutral, disagree or strongly disagree about statements depicting their potential thoughts.

In this way, whether the affected residents have the intention to be involved in the planning stage is the main area for the investigation. Is it really the case that they are



only concerned about the financial aspect of acquisition, and not the planning element of the renewal project?

**Part Three** is set to have a glimpse of how to improve the future participatory measures in a better way. Literature Review on potential benefits and reasons for enhancing public participation is referred to in setting up the questions. Ideas are got from Hampton (1977), Cook et al (1997), Mok (1988), Hain (1980) and Sanoff (2000). Respondents are asked to give rankings of how they agree to the benefits of participation.

Respondents are not supposed to spend much time in answering the questionnaires. Questions will be set in either multiple choices format or ranking. In other words, close-ended questions dominate.

### Pilot Test

The questionnaires are piloted initially by being completed by a small sample of respondents, comprising ten respondents. This is to test if the questions are set properly and intelligibly. The ease to answer and simplicity of wordings are also to

be assured by the test. Proper refinement follows in order to improve the questionnaires.

### Sampling

About 80 questionnaires will be completed by the residents living in the affected area. The amount is subject to adjustment based on the actually responding situation.

### Analysis of Findings

Detailed discussion of findings from the questionnaire follows. Weighted Average Index (WAI) is used in this dissertation. Correlations are also calculated to show the relationship between findings from different parts of the questionnaire.

Findings are discussed in light of related literature review by inferences. Inference is the process to determine the implications of the results in order to draw conclusions. (Yin 1994)

Data analysis is such a vital process in a case study. After getting information needed, it becomes no use if there is no proper analysis carried out. Analytic

strategies are suggested by Yin (1994). Feasible ones are employed in this dissertation to get the most from the questionnaire and interviews done in this case study of Kwun Tong Town Centre Project.

The general strategy employed is relying on theoretical propositions. Propositions and theories mentioned in the literature review have shaped the case study plan. To put it simply, there is a theoretical orientation guiding the whole case study analysis. This helps focus attention on certain data and to ignore other data. The organization of the entire case study is also facilitated, as our target is to answer 'how' and 'why' questions, which demonstrates kind of casual relationships. With theoretical literature as the basis, the study becomes more coherent.

## 2.12 Report Style

Linear-analytic structure is employed in the reporting of the case study (Yin 1994). The sequence involves the issue being studied, a review of the relevant prior literature, the findings from data collected, and the conclusions and implications from the findings.

## 2.13 Interview

### Semi-structured Approach

Structured interviews, with rigid questionnaires set in advance and interviewer's administering the interview, are to be avoided. This is to avoid having limited chance to obtain more details by exploring into new areas and ideas. By adopting unstructured interviews, the interviewee can express freely with the interviewer's brief introduction of the topic. The interviewees' mindset can be ignited and they are welcomed to express what they would like to share. To fully make use of the benefits of the two extreme approaches, semi-structured approach is adopted.

People not having a direct involvement in the renewal process but having concern in it are interviewed to cross validate with information got from stakeholders. District Board officers are also an important source of information as they have always followed the ongoing of the renewal process but with a neutral standpoint. This is to examine if they, as part of the social system in the Competing Values Model, is getting a stronger and stronger foothold in the whole urban renewal process system.

Officers from URA are interviewed. This is to get a balanced picture of the whole scenario while at the same time having interviews done with community organizations and questionnaires sent to stakeholders. Two major areas are to be explored in the interview. The first one, also the most important one, is to know more about the practice taking out by URA to enhance public participation in the project. Another area to be explored in the interview is URA's perception about the community.

In actuality, the respondent assists in the case study as 'informant' rather than 'respondent'. Interviews with them are essential in case study since our case study is about human affairs. Human affairs should be reported and interpreted through the eyes of the specific interviewees. A major problem with interview is the reliability as they may be subject to bias and inaccurate articulation. Thus, information from other sources, such as questionnaires and documentation, are used to corroborate interview data.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Why Urban Renewal? - Long Term Sustainability**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter tries to explain the reason for urban renewal. Before looking into public participation, which is a branch under urban renewal, it is essential to search for the answer. In fact, without urban renewal, cities run normally and evolve with the emergence of time. Why bother to deliberately renew cities while conflicts would be caused between the authorities and the affected community? This chapter tries to search for the answer. It is found that ‘long-term sustainability’ is the key.

#### **3.2 Definition of Urban Renewal**

The definition of urban renewal is given in the first place before the investigation. In a paper published in 1983 by Town Planning Division of the Lands Department, the definition of urban renewal was:

‘the plan, process and programme through which the environmental quality of large derelict areas is upgraded through large-scale clearance and redevelopment, according to new layouts in comprehensive plans prepared for the purpose.’

Urban renewal is one of the major policy areas in Hong Kong. Urban decay and overcrowded environment make the urban environment unsustainable. Urban renewal is a continuous process to redevelop and rejuvenate the derelict old urban core into a more pleasant and comfortable development, and to make Hong Kong Continually prosperous (Yiu, 1999). According to Couch (1990), urban renewal relates to the economic life of buildings. It is about the decision to refurbish, concert, replace or abandon. In other words, urban renewal is seen as the physical change in the intensity of land and buildings, which is unavoidable under the social and economic forces. Pun (1984) suggests that urban renewal was a continuous process which affects the social, economic and the environment of the area. It requires the efforts of both the public and the private sectors.

Whatever definition is employed, Chow (2002) raises a few salient features of urban renewal. They are:

1. it is a relatively large-scale and continuous process;
2. it aims to improve the overall urban environment rather than just the provision of specific facilities or the replacement of individual buildings;
3. it normally involves properties in fragmented ownership. The Government participation, including resumption is usually involved;
4. it aims to achieve comprehensive planning gains; and
5. it incurs financial costs and a degree of social disruption.

The Urban Renewal Authority (URA) of Hong Kong holds the vision of creating vibrant urban life in Hong Kong and a better home in a world class city. From this vision, we have a clearer picture of the importance of social element in the renewal concept.

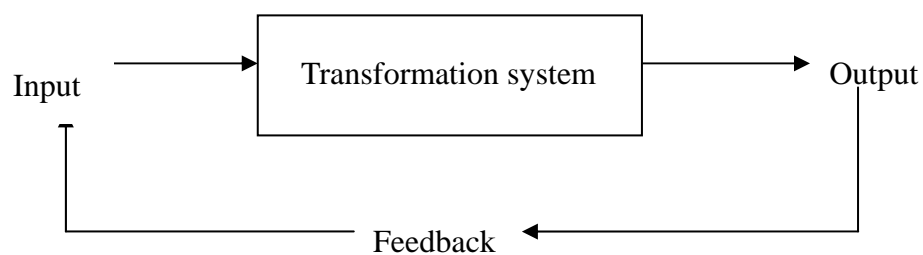
### 3.3 Organizational Theory for Urban Renewal

Couch (1990) provides an insight of urban renewal by the application of systems theory in the management field. According to *Oxford English Dictionary*, a system is ‘*a set of assemblage of things connected, or interdependent, so as to form a complex unity: a whole composed of parts in orderly arrangement according to*



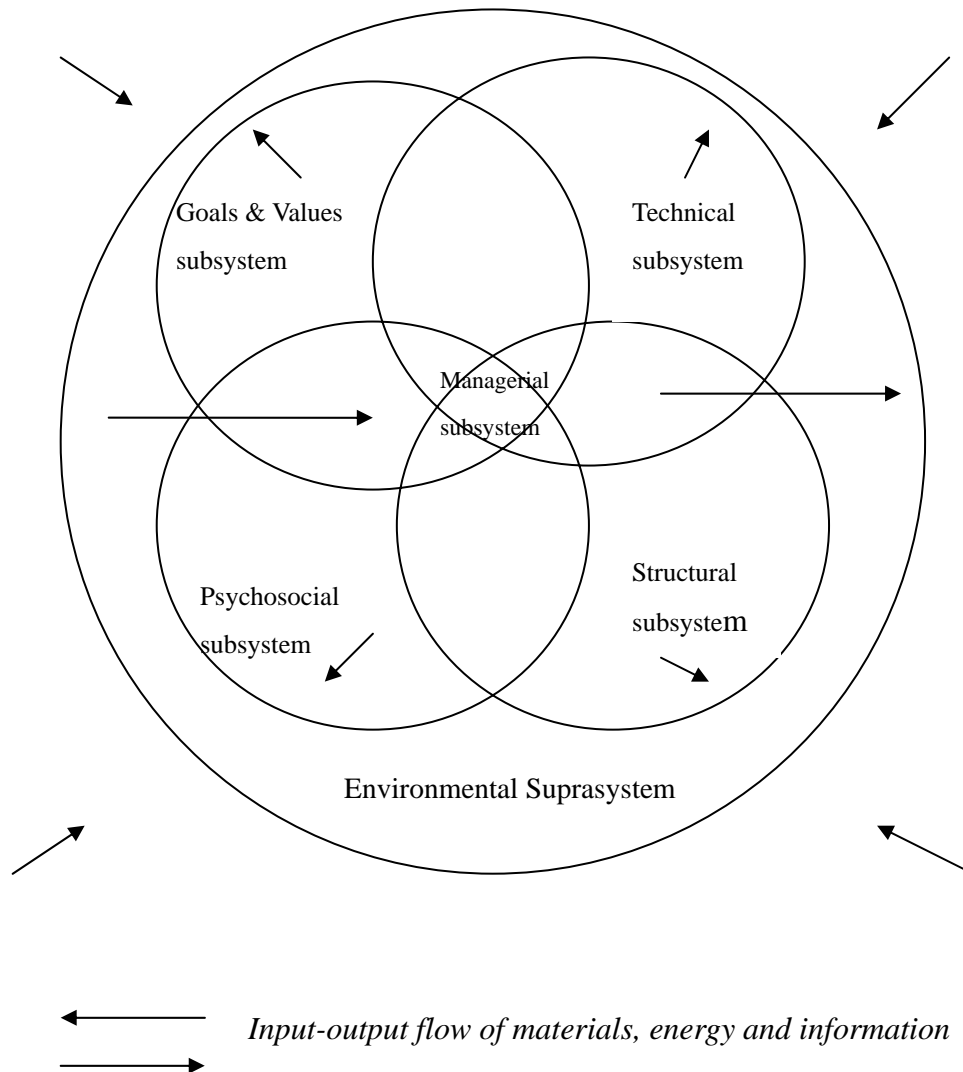
*some scheme or plan*'. We can view the URA as a system composed of a number of interdependent subsystems and delineated by identifiable boundaries from its environmental suprasystem.

Figure 2 The Organization as an Open System



*Source: Couch, C. (1990) Urban Renewal: Theory & Practice*

Figure 3 The Organization as a System



Source: Couch, C. (1990) *Urban Renewal: Theory & Practice*

Any urban renewal agency, including URA for certain, can be represented in its environment as shown in the above diagram.

The 'goals and values' subsystem is a key element as the organization must meet

certain goals relating to the society's needs in order to survive. The 'technical' subsystem is the know-how of technology within the organization. The "psychosocial' subsystem refers to the individuals within the organization, including their behavior, relationships and so on. The 'structure' means the way in which the organization is subdivided and how they are integrated. The 'managerial' subsystem covers the whole organization.

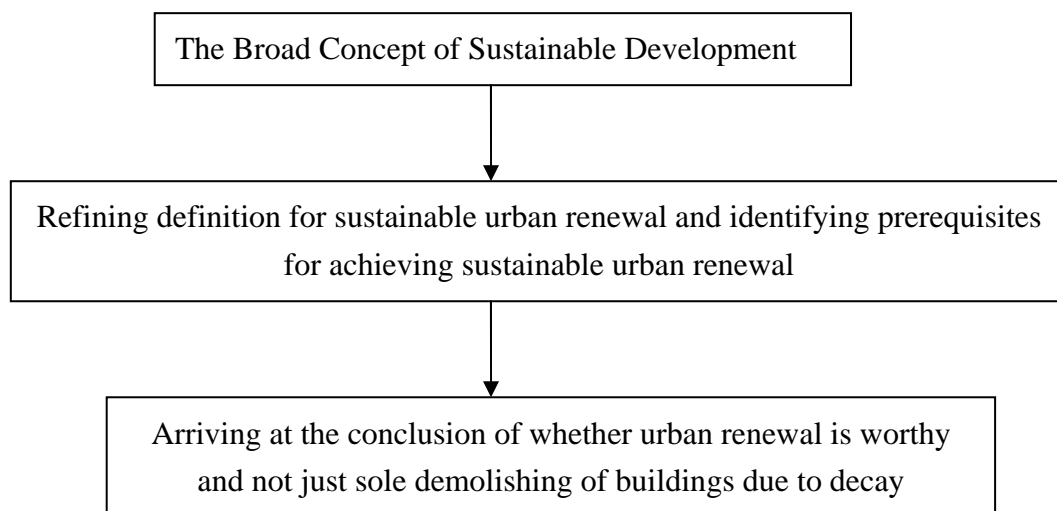
Urban renewal is a complicated process taking place in a relatively unstable and uncertain environment with few repetitive decisions. Each decision is made under different economic and social conditions with different social relations between the participating groups and organizations.

In fact, we can view urban renewal as a changing process of the cities, which has economic, environmental and social impacts. The crux is the presence of all the three above mentioned factors. This transits us to the concept of sustainability in urban renewal.

### 3.4 A Broad Concept of Sustainable Development

Why urban renewal takes place, provided that the world can operate without any deliberate demolition? The answer to this question relates to sustainability brought about by urban renewal. To put it simply, we should view urban renewal as a kind of sustainable development but not merely urban redevelopment.

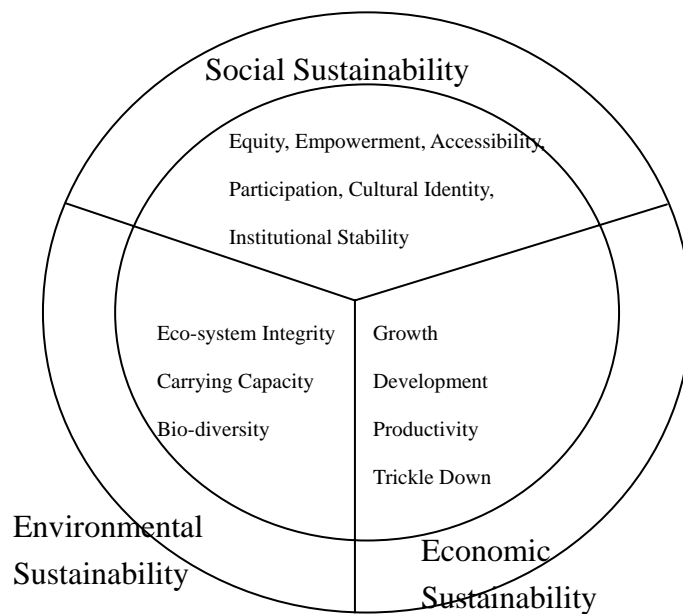
Figure 4 The Structure of the Arguments for Value of Urban Renewal



For the sake of convenience, it is common for past literatures to limit discussion on sustainable development to environmental rather than economic and social. Yet, in our discussion of sustainable development, there is overlap among the three.

According to Khan (1995), sustainable development scenario is depicted as in Figure 3, with sustainable development laying at the intersection of the spheres.

Figure 5 The Paradigm of Sustainable Development



*Source: Khan, M. A. (1995) Sustainable development: the key concepts, issues and implications*

A brief description of the three types of sustainability is given here. Regarding environmental sustainability, it means that natural capital must be maintained, both as a provider of inputs and as a ‘sink’ for wastes (Khan, 1995). Economic sustainability relates to a production process that satisfies the present level of

consumption without compromising future needs. Social sustainability relates to poverty alleviation. Growth and poverty alleviation are the keys to the preservation of environmental sustainability. We have to ensure a growth-oriented and an equity-based enabling environment to ensure optimization in resource allocation and use and equity in resource distribution.

Sustainable development tries to integrate the objectives and reconcile the interests of environment, economic and social domain into the development policies and practice to satisfy human needs. It requires us to consider and think for the whole system instead of specific parts. We are no longer confined to any single discipline. During the planning process of the development, the three spheres need to be brought into increasingly closer union so that economic progress is contained within environmental and societal limits and the needs of both contemporaries are met. Failure of meeting one or more of the spheres will result in failure to achieve sustainability in both short and long terms. Five core concepts of sustainable development are identified by Tam (1999):

1. Environment – Respect the intrinsic value of the environment and maintenance of ecological integrity and carrying capacity;

2. Quality of life – Meeting the needs and enhancement of human well-being;
3. Equity – Ensure a fair distribution of benefits within society (intra-generational equity) and between generations (inter-generational equity)
4. Futurity – Concerning the needs and well-being of future generations; and
5. Participation – Encourage inputs from different sectors of society in formulation policies and programme for sustainable development.

Under the broad conceptual framework for sustainable development, we now proceed into the specific area of policy activity, which is urban renewal.

### 3.4.1 How the Concept of Sustainability applied to Urban Renewal

Eliminating incompatible land use and promoting efficient use of land in the old urban areas are also a form of sustainable development. Besides the environmental concern, which is to improve the living and working environment, urban renewal also has implications on the economic and social systems. According to Tam (1998), renewal process should take into consideration the situation of the older part dwellers and the overall influence on local community, but not solely to renew the buildings. Urban renewal policies have to look to the future and consider how the

current proposal can meet the needs of the population and improve the living environment, both in the present and in the future generation. A new planning praxis, taking into account economic, environment and social factors, for sustainable urban renewal, is needed.

In summary:

Sustainable urban renewal is a community-based process directed towards achieving economic, environment and social well-beings of society, both for the present and future generations.

This definition re-addresses the need to put human and community back to the focus of the urban renewal programme rather than just focusing on the physical asset. This idea also echoes the main focus of this dissertation, which moves back to the community and human aspects of community participation in the urban renewal process. More is discussed on the community aspect in the following paragraphs.

### Community

It is the very first principle of sustainable urban renewal. Wismer (1990) raises that



community is one of the most important guiding principles in assessing the sustainable development in the urban context, as any new development or redevelopment of old urban area must be within the lives of people living in or close to that urban environment.

Thus, renewal policies should never be formulated without the community's participation. Urban renewal is about people in-groups. It must be community-based and act according to the community interests in the old districts. Sustainable urban renewal should always respect the community rights, meaning that the community should have freedom and authority to creatively develop what they think best. The authority should emphasize on its social role and ensure that social objectives are being incorporated in the decision-making and planning process.

Tam (1999)'s summary

Sustainable urban renewal should respect community history, strengthen community identity, facilitate community building, and fulfill the needs and expectations of the community.

### Carley and Kirk (1998) 's Prerequisites for Renewal

According to Carley and Kirk (1998), sustainability applied to urban renewal is twofold. First, there is beneficial interaction between the economy, environment and social development. Second, there is intergenerational equity, ensuring that whatever we do now leaves future generations better off.

A few prerequisites are identified for sustainable urban renewal to be tested.

Firstly, it is a long-term perspective on the future of the city. Vision has to be developed on which to build consensus and guide policy. 'Short termism' has to be avoided with the belief that renewal is not just a task to be accomplished quickly. We have to avoid a preference for quick, funding-driven solution to deep-seated challenges.

Secondly, renewal has to be regarded as a means to tackle the social and economic exclusion of disadvantaged households. Sadly, very often, begun with the best intentions, some projects end up being organized around the requirements of property development rather than addressing the social and economic aspects.

The third prerequisite is community involvement in regeneration partnerships. This feature also reflects the crux of the following sections. A genuine partnership with the community is challenging yet essential to contribute part of sustainable renewal projects. This implies to enhance the ability of communities to participate in the development and implementation of renewal strategy and more long term community governance.

Fourthly, clear objectives for the success of renewal are essential for monitoring. A clear and stated long term goal is a key to ‘adaptive management’ for sustainability. We have to avoid over-focusing on solving idiosyncratic problems of disadvantaged estates, when the real objective must be the reintegration of those estates in the townscape. This suggests physical, economic and social parameters of sustainable renewal.

We can see that among the above four points, except the third one about community participation, all the others relates to a very essential aspect, which is the environmental, social and economic elements found in sustainable development.

## Tam's (1999) Five Guiding Principles

Tam (1999) suggests five guiding principles for sustainable urban renewal.

Community: This point is raised in the previous paragraphs due to its importance.

Sustainable urban renewal should respect community history, strengthen community identity, facilitate community building, and fulfill the needs and expectations of the community

Participation: Sustainable urban renewal process should be participatory, making good use of local knowledge and taking into account of the interests and perspectives of different stakeholders. Participation channels and information should be open and accessible to all.

Equity: Sustainable urban renewal should ensure equitable distribution of benefits and costs. It should consider the impacts on the different social groups, especially the plight of the disadvantaged groups, and ensure that adequate resources and services are available to mitigate the adverse impacts on their life.

Environment: Sustainable urban renewal should improve the overall living and working environment in order to promote and protect the health and safety of the people. It should also stem further urban decline.

Economy: Sustainable urban renewal should improve the economic conditions and prosperity, both for the old urban area and the whole territory.

By fulfilling all the above guiding principles, urban renewal is made absolutely necessary for the continuous well-being of the society. It is not just demolition and construction of new buildings. Rather, it is a sustainable development contributing to the ongoing of our society for the future generations and integration of economic, social and environment benefits.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Competing Key Systems in the Urban Renewal Process**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

We have arrived at the conclusion that urban renewal has its place and worth. The next question is then, who should be the initiator of the renewal process? By the term 'who', the key is which 'groups' of people rather than which 'person'. Which group of people dominates and acts as the leader? What kind of thought it represents? The Competing Key Systems is used to demonstrate the answers.

#### **4.2 The Framework**

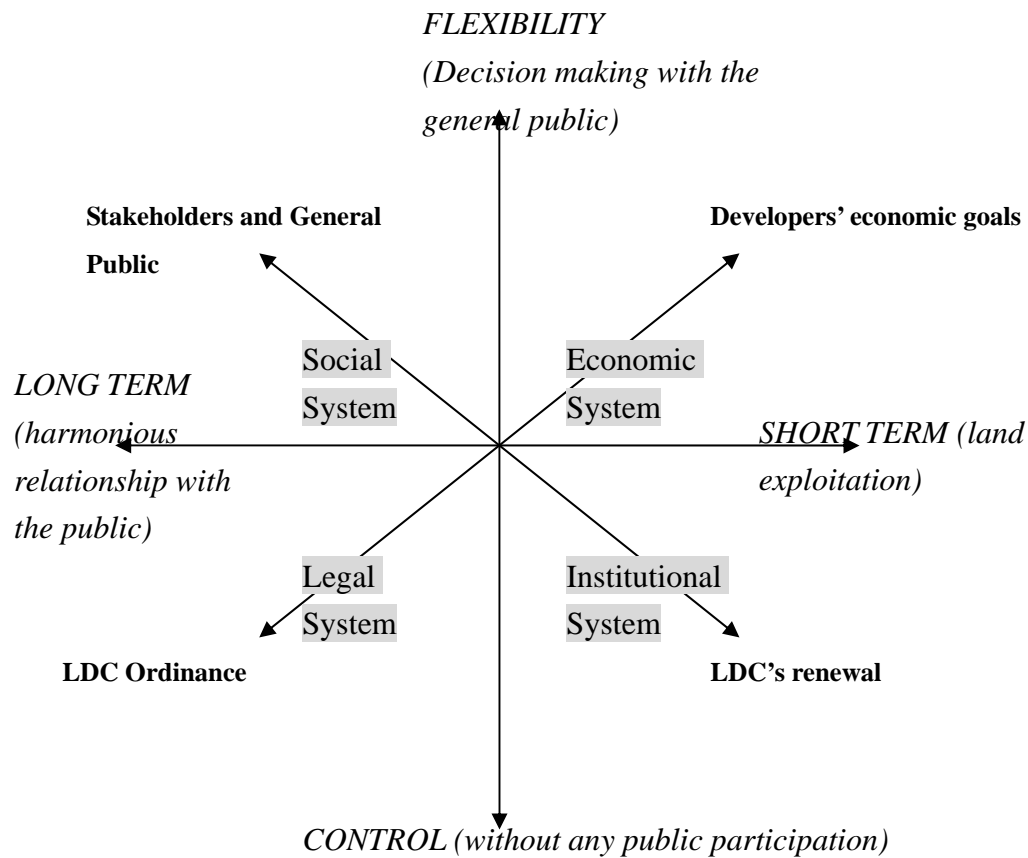
Before looking into literatures on the topic, a framework underpinning the competing parties in the whole urban renewal process is proposed so as to demonstrate the situation and evolvement of the participatory process of urban renewal in Hong Kong. The framework is adapted from the Competing Values Framework from Quinn 1988.

The model provides a dynamic focus and allows us to move from the traditional 'either/or thinking to a both/and approach. The different forces existing are interacting with each other. The framework shows that there is an oppositional nature. Any point on one side of the diagram is in perceptual tension with any point on the opposite side of the diagram. Yet empirically, it is possible to engage in behaviors at two opposite points in the framework.

The key elements in the proposed framework are the social system, economic system, institutional system and legal system. The four systems are in conflict with each other in the overall urban renewal process. They are modeled along the opposing x-y axes of short term versus long term (sustainability) and flexibility versus control by the ordinances. The four quadrants, representing the four systems, are driving force away from each other and they have to be harmonized.

Following the elapse of time, the force acting on different quadrants alters. The nature of some quadrants is also changing. The figure below shows the competing key systems in urban renewal process in the era of Land Development Corporation.

Figure 6 *Competing Key Systems in Urban Renewal Process in the era of LDC*



Source: Adopted from Liu, A. M. M. (2005) *The framework underpinning conflicting keys in sustainability: harmony-in-transit*

#### 4.2.1 The 4 Systems

##### Social System

Skeffington (1969)'s definition of public participation in land use planning offers a clear picture of the role of the social system among the four quadrants of the urban



renewal process. The definition is as follows,

*The act of sharing in the formulation of policies and proposals through the giving of information by the planning authority and of an opportunity for public to comment on that information in the process of participation...*

The general public, particularly the stakeholders, favor participation in the planning process and tend to act as a conflicting party against the renewal policies of LDC. Long term sustainability of the community is emphasized rather than the short term economic gains. High flexibility in the whole renewal process by thorough public participation is the target of this system.

The force of this quadrant was not powerful comparing with that of the LDC. Botes and Rensburg (2000) mentions that one of the plagues of public participation is the lack of public interest in becoming involved. People are ignorant and need to be steered in the right direction by those who 'know better'. Nagel (1987) raises that rational people tend not to participate and remain as free-riders. Rational egoistic people may sometimes participate. Such situational participation depends on the individual's own efficacy and his own perception of the potential benefits to be gained

by him and others as contrasts with the cost of participation. If motivation is related to an altruistic perception, an individual will then participate regardless of what others do and perceive.

The Hong Kong society at that time was more of the egoistic nature. Added to this nature was the strong sense of Chinese traditional culture. Thus, the social system did not play an effective role in the competing model. A good example showing the egoistic nature was the LDC's Owners' Participation Proposal (OPP). The OPP offered the affected owners to participate in the redevelopment project. Yet, it was eventually abandoned because no owners agreed to participate.

### Institutional System

The Land Development Corporation (LDC) was set up in 1987. It was established by the Government, aiming to facilitate and accelerate urban renewal. The LDC had a statutory obligation to conduct business according to prudent commercial principles. Most projects completed were profit-oriented rather than social-oriented. This draws the institutional system towards the economic system, making LDC prone to the target of maximizing economic goals with developers.

To facilitate more profits through joint venture with private developers, LDC favored less public participation so as to fasten the urban renewal process. Clearly this was in conflict with the social system. Its force was comparatively larger than the social system's, because of the limited measures to facilitate participation. Public participation was restricted in consultation only through seminar, district council and hotline, all with passive nature. There was no formal channel to let the public express opinion regarding urban renewal issues, enhancing its force. More about LDC is to be discussed in the next Chapter.

What is more, Botes and Rensburg (2000) states that there has been over-reporting of development success. Success related to development are quantified, documented and communicated to a greater extent than failures. The authorities have an interest in presenting a picture of success. The very information which allows intervention policy to improve, is lost. The same applies to LDC. It tended to conceal failure and did not disclose much to remind others of the need to improve. This strengthened its forces. Hard issues, meaning things like technology, finance, physical things, were always the focus. Soft issues, meaning the social and cultural features, were regarded as intangible and unnecessary.

### Economic System

Developers worked in joint venture with LDC to develop area affected by the renewal process. They care about the economic goals achieved by successfully developing the area, with little concern about long term suitability of the overall development of the district as a whole. Public participation is not what they are concerned with.

According to Botes and Rensburg (2000), developers tend to play the paternalistic role of development professionals. They predominantly have the mindset that they are the one who tell other people what they should do and think. This enforces a larger competing force against the legal system.

### Legal System

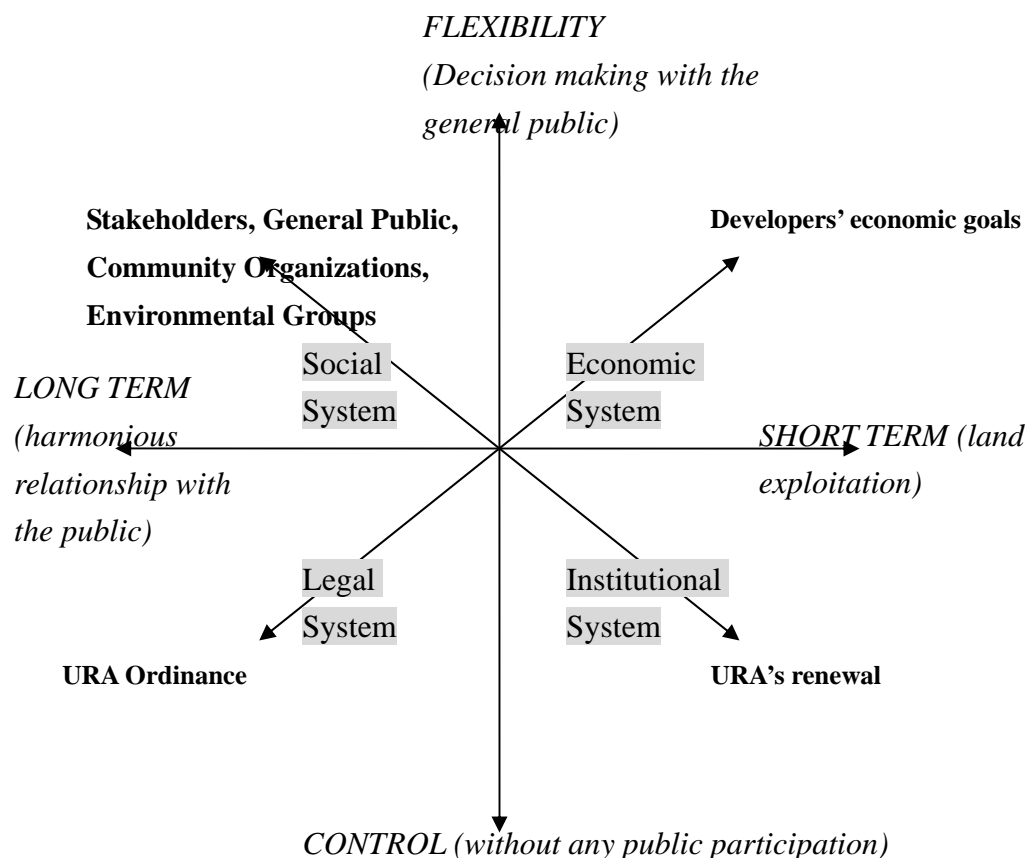
The LDC Ordinance was enacted in 1987. It set up clearly the procedures and rules that LDC had to comply with during the renewal process. Rigid regulations were listed to avoid manipulation by the money-driven developers, exercising a conflicting force against the economic system. A certain degree of public participation and control by the Secretary for Lands and Works were ensured by the Ordinance. The

details of the Ordinance are to be covered in the next Chapter.

### 4.3 Alteration to the System following the Establishment of URA

In the era of Urban Renewal Authority which was set up in 2001 to supersede Land Development Corporation, the Competing Key Systems has changed slightly. The diagram requires amendments.

Figure 7 Competing Key Systems in Urban Renewal Process in the era of URA



Source: Adopted from Liu, A. M. M. (2005) *The framework underpinning conflicting keys in sustainability: harmony-in-transit*

### Change in Social System

The main amendment rests on the social system. In addition to stakeholders and the general public, community organizations are on the rise to strengthen the power of the social system. Community organizations include district offices, voluntary organizations helping the needy and even environmental groups concerning the district environment.

Community organizations aside, the community witnesses the rise of environmental groups. Green Power is a significant environmental group in Hong Kong. It actively undertakes investigations and research. Reports are released on a regular basis to raise public awareness and understanding of the relationship between the environment and our quality of life and health. The Group even has representatives in governmental environmental advisory bodies, such as the Advisory Council on Environment, Town Planning Board, The Country and Marine Parks Board, Transport Advisory Committee and Environmental Campaign Committee. (Green Power Homepage: [www.greenpower.org.hk](http://www.greenpower.org.hk))

There is also change in the community's attitude. It was mentioned that people tend not to participate. Following the change of time, the public is paying more and more attention to public affairs. One of the major reasons is that the education level of the general public is higher.

### Change in Institutional System

The Urban Renewal Authority (URA) was set up on May 1 2001 to supersede LDC. The URA tends to adopt the strategy of selling cleared sites to private developers rather than building itself. The commercial prudent concept no longer applies. Rather, a more social oriented approach is adopted.

People-oriented approach is what URA focuses on. It considers the arrangements of the residential accommodation in advance for any displacement of residents, which will result as the development scheme is implemented. Thus, the institutional system is now willing to give up more so as to facilitate public participation. The force competing with social system is kind of decreasing. Together with the absence of the statutory obligation to conduct business according to prudent commercial principles, the URA is now less drawn to the economic system. This contributes to the stronger

force of the social system in the whole Competing Key System.

#### Change in Legal System

The URA Ordinance was set up on July 7 2000. One example is illustrated here to demonstrate the power enhancement of it comparing with the LDC Ordinance. Previously, the LDC Ordinance offered the LDC no power to sell or dispose land that it had assembled for a development project. Now, the URA Ordinance enables the URA power to dispose of resumed land after approval from the Chief Executive. As a result, URA has more flexibility and power to deal with matters relating to resumption. More about the URA Ordinance is to be discussed in the next Chapter.

#### Change in Economic System

Developers' economic goals represent the system undergoing the least alteration. Their goals remain the same. The only slight change occurs because of the evolvement from LDC to URA, drawing the institutional system less prone to the economic system.



#### 4.4 Long Term Sustainability

There are the above four main conflicting systems in the urban renewal process. In fact, long term sustainability can be achieved even though they are in conflict. Liu (2005) states that it is related to a concept of dynamic equilibrium. The notion of H. I. T. (harmony-in-transit) is introduced to depict that at any point in time, the conflicting forces must be harmonized to produce an acceptable direction for pursuing sustainable development. Harmony is actually dynamic in nature, implying a constant movement happening to present no movement because of the nature of corresponding reaction.

We can view the urban renewal as a kind of dynamic motion achieving sustainability in the long run. Equilibrium is never static. The ever changing urban environment is presenting a dynamic notion to achieve the non-static equilibrium. All the theories mentioned in the later section are all contributing to this dynamic equilibrium.

#### 4.5 Emerging Dominating Groups

As mentioned before, the social quadrant, with the general public, stakeholders,

environmental groups and community organizations are gaining importance and having more say as time goes by. It is highly possible that this quadrant continues to grow and gain strength. Community participation is closely related to the growing of this quadrant. This is a major reason why this dissertation focuses on community participation. We will examine in detail the aspects relating to this quadrant, with the focus on stakeholders and the general public.

## 4.6 Elementary Concepts of the Social System in the Competing Values Model

### *Public Participation*

To examine the strengthening of social system quadrant, we need to understand more on what public participation really is, as the focus of this dissertation is on the stakeholders and general public of the social system.

Arnstein (1969) describes it as the cornerstone of democracy. It is the redistribution of power enabling the have-not citizens who are presently excluded from the decision making process to be deliberately included in the future. Participation is ‘real’ when participants are able to determine the outcome.

Darke (2000) defines public participation as the range of opportunities and mechanisms for the public to engage directly in the land-use and environmental policy process, either as a form of ‘politics’ or as a limited form of direct engagement in ‘government’. It helps move the official policy process closer towards the idea of participatory democracy.

Closely relating to the idea of participation, we have to be clear on the crucial distinction between 'politics' and 'government'. Suggested by Jones and Ranson (1989), 'politics' is an activity where the merits of alternative forms of action to deal with problems in the public sphere can be publicly debated as a prelude to choice. It is a way individual and groups in society put their opinions onto the agenda for collective action by the government. 'Government', on the other hand, is where decisions are formally made on behalf of all.

Participation can take the form of consultation and debate, where the public is engaged in discussion but has no right to decide policy (politics), through to more direct forms of decision-making about planning and environmental issues (government).

Hain (1980) asserts that public participation offers the promise of 'more power to the people'. It offers a greater say for the individual citizen in the decision-making process. But, there exists 'unreal' participation. Jette (1990) describes 'unreal' participation as a form of tactical participation in which participatory action and activities are mere 'perceptions' manipulated by the manager. The authorities try to employ strategies to manipulate participatory efforts so as to gain support and induce

citizens to agree to decisions already taken. Participation can only be considered as 'real' when the effort is 'autonomous' and free from opposing authorities' control. Verba (1978) also argues that real participation is 'the kind of participation which emphasizes a flow of influence upward from the masses'. Those situations' whereby citizens 'take part' by expressing support for the government, marching in parades etc.' are only 'ceremonial or support' type of participation.

### *Community Practice*

According to Thornton (1996), the term includes techniques promoting, fostering, and implementing community policies. Such policies cover approaches to community participation.

Glen (1993) suggests four elements to view community practice as a generic term.

1. Work of self-managed groups (e.g. residents' groups)
2. Work of community workers (e.g. community action and development)
3. Work of other professionals with a community focus (e.g. social workers, police officers)

4. Work of policy makers (e.g. development of community policies)

Yap (1993) suggests that participation associates the idea that assumes an activity in which the community takes part and the involvement of at least one other party, usually a government agency or a non-government organization (NGO). There is a tacit assumption that the other party is the initiator. Even though the community initiates an activity and the government comes to assist, one does not speak of government participation but of community participation.

Public participation is the process by which public concerns, needs and values are incorporated into governmental and corporate decision making. Apart from the above definition, Creighton (2005) surveys some other definitions and concludes that the following four elements are essential:

1. Public participation applies to administrative decisions
2. Public participation is the interaction between organizations and people, but not just providing information to the public
3. It is an organized process rather than happening accidentally
4. The participants have a certain level of impact on the decision being made

These all echo and supplement what Hain (1980) and Arnstein (1969) mentioned.

The International Association for Public Participation further defines public participation by defining its core values. They are:

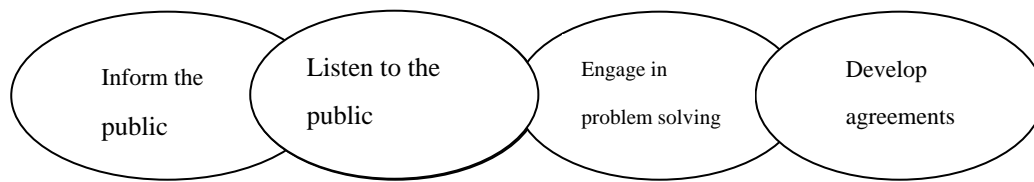
- The public should have a say in decisions affecting their lives.
- There is a promise that public's contribution will make an influence.
- The process communicates the interests of the public and meets the process needs of participants.
- The process facilitates the involvement of potentially affected parties.
- The process involves the participants to define how they participate.
- The process provides participants with the information they need in order to participate in a meaningful way.
- The process communicates to participants how their input affects the decision.

Creighton (2005) also suggests that participation is best understood as a continuum.

On this continuum, there are an unlimited number of points. To put it simply, we

identify four major categories:

Figure 8 Continuum of Participation



*Source: Creighton, J. L., (2005), The Public Participation Handbook*

Most policy decisions are about value choices rather than technical ones. They are not the questions of right or wrong. Rather, they involve assigning a weight to a decision the society thinks is good compared to another thing.

‘Collaborative processes’ is what we are concerned with most, instead of mere public consultation. It generates ‘win-win’ solutions with all participants feeling content. The processes include early community consultation, negotiated rule-making, facilitated policy dialogue, participatory planning and public-private partnerships.

Officers of URA are not necessarily the best people to make such decisions. There is



nothing about expertise or professional knowledge. Through public participation, there can be channels for URA to have a dialogue with the public and increase the public's influence on the decisions affecting their own lives.

### *Community*

There are three senses of the term 'community'. According to Butcher (1993), they are "descriptive", "value" and "active".

'Descriptive community' refers to people sharing something in common. It generally involves the social interaction within the group.

Community as 'value' describes the word in evaluative meaning. Another three community values are identified, comprising solidarity, participation and coherence.

'Active community' builds on the descriptive and value meanings mentioned above. It refers to the collective action and the most commonly referred to by policy makers. This is a vital element in community practice.

Hampton (1977) suggests that it is vital to distinguish between ‘major elites’ (such as local business groups), ‘minor elites’ (such as local community associations) and ‘a collectivity of individuals’. While deriving suitable public participatory measures, it is crucial to distinguish the focus groups.

Abbott (1995) further describes ‘community’ as an agglomeration of factions and interest groups locked in competitive relationships. The idea is in contrary to Butcher’s (1993), where community refers to people sharing common goals.

In a social prospective, similar to Abbott’s (1995), Yap (1993) defines ‘community’ as a group of people with face-to-face contact, a sense of belonging together and common interests and values. People living in a delimited area identify themselves with that area and share an interest in its development to form a community.

## **Chapter 5**

### **Theoretical Concepts of Public Participation**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

Why participation? This question is fundamental in this dissertation. The answer is also simple. If a decision with public support is needed, a problem solving climate must be present involving public participation in the early decision process. Public is to be drawn into a stronger relationship with the government and thus enhancing their future ability to play a significant role in policy-making. Hampton (1977) calls this “enhancing citizenship” and a broader democratic objective.

#### **5.2 Benefits brought about by Enhancement of Public Participation**

Pateman (1970) arguing from the perspective of developing democracy in the society, has claimed that ‘the major function of participation in the theory of participatory democracy is therefore an educative one, educative in the very widest sense, including both the psychological aspect and the gaining of practice in democratic skills and

procedures'. Participatory activities thus help in developing and fostering necessary qualities for democracy.

Cook et al (1997) puts forward the idea that participatory mechanisms help keeps authorities honest and perform their duties more sensitively. Elite ideas can also be got from the public, which are sometimes extremely useful to the final outcome. Better coordination, higher levels of trust and confidence among residents and officials can also be brought about. According to Mok (1988), citizen participation achieves a range of objectives, including the strengthening of citizen's capacity for self-determination, self-actualization and problem-solving. A number of indigenous community leaders who possess the capacity to undertake political negotiation can also be generated.

Fong (2001) raises a pragmatic consideration as the strongest argument for public participation. If the authority is genuine in its concern for the public good, then the end-users requirements must be clearly understood by the officers. If not, there is no way that the professionals can master every detail in the locality. Professionals tend to think in a wide societal view, catering to the 'public interest' and trying to satisfy the majority of the competing demands. Details and small group needs have no place in

their macro-minded thinking. Public participation is a good way for the local residents to fit in the picture by providing the details of what is best suited to the local community.

Hain (1980) raises out the idea that public participation is a rebirth of the ideal of a self-governing community which might give the citizen a sense of place which is lacking in contemporary society. Citizens have a desire for the maximum feasible power for minimum feasible areas, meaning they want small face-to-face-groups. Participation is also a means to combat the exclusion of the poor from the political system. It springs out of an estrangement from the conventional structure of representative democracy. Fong (2000) further reinstates the idea of 'stewardship of environment'. This helps the development of citizenship and people will be more attached to the environment.

Public participation promotes two-way communication. Planners can know more of the aspirations of neighborhood and people can know all the constraints and possibilities of the area. The two parties own different expertise. Sanoff (2000) supports the collaboration of the two. Planners own the knowledge to solve problems while the public can identify problems rather than solving them. The collaboration

helps avoid misunderstanding between the two parties. Without public participation, the authority juggles a lot of factors in its mind but never made known to the public, who then blame the authority for not adopting a certain strategy, not knowing that the strategy may conflict with other factors.

Darke (2000) puts forward similar arguments for a more general extension of public participation. Society and public opinion is becoming more diverse while government procedures have severe shortcomings. Profound changes are occurring in all aspects of life but professionals and politicians simply cannot keep abreast of the growing diversity of needs and interests within the population.

Yap (1993) raises four arguments to explain the need for participation. They are:

1. It is a right and a form of grassroots democracy.
2. It is a right, but participation in solely the renewal projects is not the most important form of participation. It must be extended to all spheres of life and must include the sharing of benefits of the renewal. It is more of a learning process, in which the public becomes aware of their satiation and build up self-confidence and understand their power.

3. It is a means to achieve better project results. Only close cooperation between authorities and community can result in projects which satisfy both the community and the authority. Project effectiveness is the focus. This echoes the idea of Fong (2001) and Cook et al (1997).
4. It is a means to facilitate project execution. The focus is on project efficiency.

In Hong Kong, the gap between the rich and the poor is still widening. Participation is the only means by which the less powerful stratum can be empowered to develop their potential and self-esteem and to lead a decent life in a livable environment.

### 5.3 Literature on Participatory Situation

#### Orbits of Participation

The general public comprises a large number of people. Before talking about participatory procedures, it has to be made clear that the public in fact cannot be regarded as 'one'. There exist different orbits, representing different types of citizens with different levels of interests and awareness for the nucleus, which is the decision-making process.

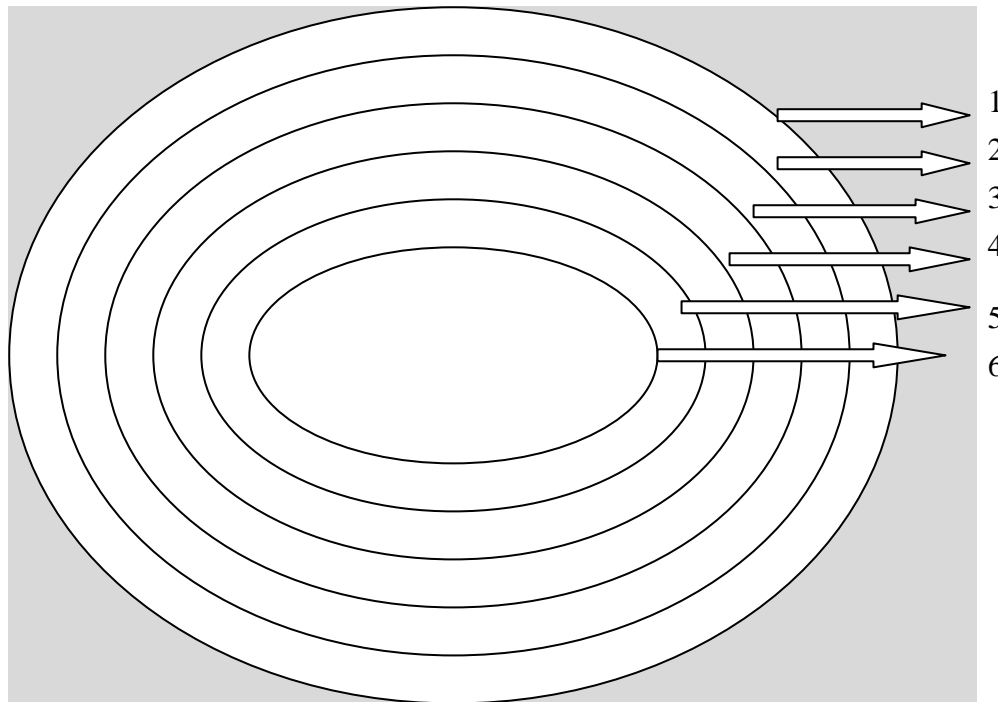
Lorenz Aggens (1983) develops the orbits analogy.

*"Think of each level as an 'orbit' of activity around the project nucleus-the decision-making process. The closer an orbit of activity is to this decision making centre, the greater the opportunity there is for public influence in that decision."*

He describes the public as consisting of six orbits. Creighton (2005) combines Aggens's with changes and comes up with the modified Orbits of Participation as follows:



Figure 9 Orbits of Participation



*Source: Creighton, J. L., (2005), The Public Participation Handbook*

Respectively starting from the fringe one, the six orbits (1-6) are:

1 Unsurprised apathetics:

They do not participate due to a number of reasons such as too busy or have little interest. They are apathetic to other issues but not to the topic ones. Still, they are unsurprised because efforts are made to inform them when a decision is made.

Possible participation mechanisms: press release, news

2 Observers:

They do not voice out the opinion unless they are really concerned with what is going on. Usually, newspaper articles and information documents are their means to get informed. They may make comments to other public interest groups and special interest organizations.

Possible participation mechanisms: websites, newsletters

3 Commenters:

They do not commit by participating in advisory groups. Rather, they show their interest in the issue by sending letters or speaking at a meeting.

Possible participation mechanisms: public meetings, comment periods

4 Technical reviewers:

Some agencies tend to share decision making authority with them when it comes to

the methodologies used to evaluate the impact of projects.

Possible participation mechanisms: Technical advisory committees, peer review processes

#### 5 Active participants:

They want to be sure that they have an influence. Advisory groups, workshops and meetings are participated. The public participation process should not leave them out but to include them as early as possible. Otherwise, they may express their views by some other means like political channel or other forums.

Possible participation mechanisms: advisory groups, workshops

#### 6 Co-decision makers:

People in the organization or even outside it who will make the final decision are known as co-decision makers. Examples are key customers, a partner in a joint venture, or a local government with authority.

Excluding them in the public participation process is fatal. They may feel insulted and not respected. They should be included even in the design of the public participation process.

Possible participation mechanisms: negotiation, partnering

By identifying the orbits, we can use different public participation techniques to involve different orbits. It is always important to identify which orbits the affected people belong to. Then, suitable participation mechanisms can be devised in order to prevent failure and resource wastage.

### Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation (Arnstein, 1969)

After identifying the orbits of the affected public, it comes to the identification of different levels of public participation. Again, public participation cannot be regarded as 'one'. There are different kinds of participation, involving different extents of power delegated to the public.

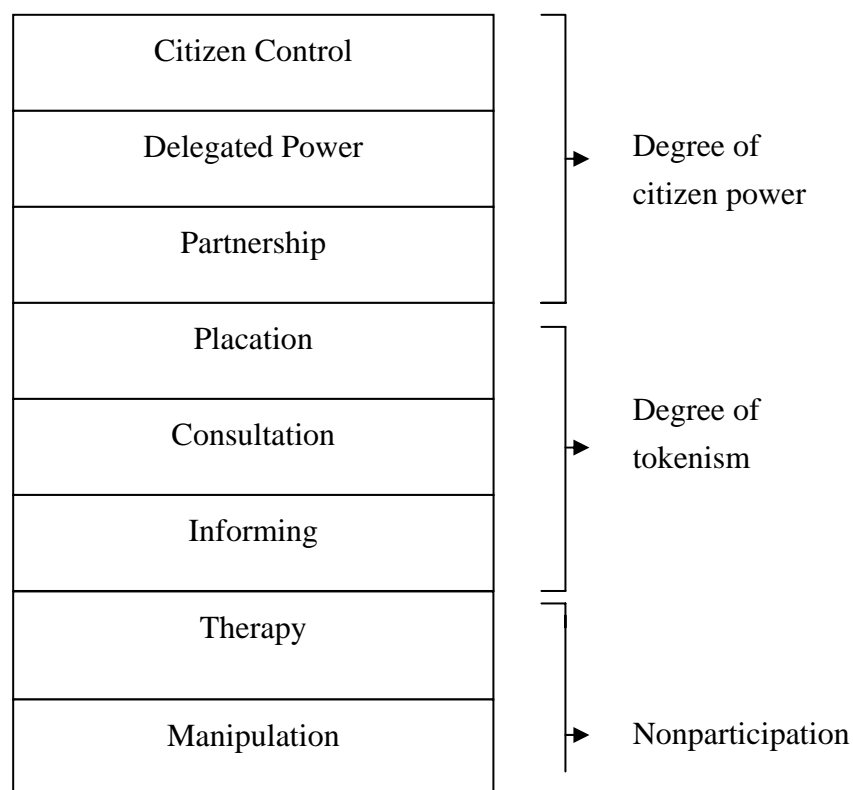
The famous Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation (Arnstein, 1969) was

introduced in 1969. It provides a framework of different levels of public participation.

An important feature of participation is shown, which is the gradation of participation.

Eight levels of participation are identified. They are arranged in a ladder pattern. Each rung corresponds to the extent of citizens' power.

Figure 10 Arnstein's Ladder of Participation



Source: Arnstein, S. R. (1969), *A Ladder of Citizen Participation*

According to Arnstein, participation without redistribution of power is an empty and

frustrating process for the powerless. It allows the powerholders to claim that all sides were considered but makes it possible for only some to benefit. The bottom two rungs belong to this category. The objective is not to enable people to participate, but for the powerholders to 'educate' or 'cure' the participants. Rung 3 and 4 are levels of 'tokenism' that allows the have-nots to have a voice. Still, they lack the power to insure that their views will be heeded by the powerful. Even Rung 5 (Placation) does not guarantee the have-nots the power to change the status-quo. It is because the powerholders still continue to hold the right to decide.

The upper three rungs, which are 'partnership', 'delegated power' and 'citizen control', give the have-nots citizens full managerial power. In Rung 6 (Partnership), the have-nots can negotiate and engage in trade-offs with traditional power holders. At the topmost rungs, they obtain the majority of decision-making seats.

We have to be careful of the instrumental purposes of participation, avoiding the bottom rungs of the ladder. If not, public opinion is just a support of the authority's ideas and public participation would be just a tool to secure public approval and a vehicle for publicity and 'public relations'.

*Shortcomings of the Ladder of Participation*

Darke (2000) points out that this ladder of participation has shortcomings. One is its apparent elevation of one set of interests, the public; in the policy process above all others. Another shortcoming is that it fails to distinguish between ‘politics’ and ‘government’, which is mentioned in the previous paragraph.

The ladder fails to reveal the potential shortcoming that public participation initiated by government can include public relation and manipulation, without any release of power to the public at all. In addition, there can be a number of interests or stakeholders involved. They include developers, neighbors, local interest groups, voluntary organizations, neighboring councils and so on. ‘The public’ is not ‘one’. This echoes Creighton’s (2005) Orbits of Participation mentioned in this Chapter. All the bodies consider that they have a legitimate place in the participatory process and they may even consider that they represent the ‘public interest’. At the same time, local public opinion can be parochial and not always in the broader interest. One example is NIMBY, meaning ‘not in my backyard’ protesting against the provision of new affordable housing in the UK.

### Yap's (1993) Concepts

Yap (1993) criticizes Arnstein's ladder as well. There is no difference in the locus of power between placation, consultation, informing, manipulation and therapy. Power remains in the hands of authorities.

As a kind of alternative to Arnstein's ladder, he raises that here are two criteria, which are the locus of power and the relationship between the parties.

Figure 11 Yap's Concepts of Community Participation

		Locus of Power	
		Power sharing	No power sharing
Partnership	Yes	Participation	Co-operation
	No	Education	Manipulation

*Source: Yap, K. S. (1993) Community participation in low-income housing projects: problems and prospects, Community Development Journal, Vol. 28, No. 4*

The four concepts:



*Participation-* It is the genuine participation that we are looking for. This takes place in any of the following three forms:

1. Citizens' control: The community holds the decision-making power.
2. Delegated power: The authorities delegate responsibilities to the community.
3. Community representation: Representatives form part of the decision-making board.

*Co-operation-* There is no power sharing. Consultation is present but the authority makes decision.

*Education-* The purpose is to gradually grant power to the community as it learns how to use it. The community considers the power sharing a right. But, the authority sees it as a learning process for the community. The community is still in control by the authority.

*Manipulation-* The authority tries to align the community's opinions with its own views 'for the community's own good'

Finding out the category of the current participation situation in the urban renewal

process is a prerequisite for devising new methods to improve the situation. The perfect situation would be that the participatory process is in the ‘participation’ level proposed by Yap. It, however, is not the case with the current urban renewal process in Hong Kong.

### The Johari Window

A theoretical concept is required to explain a big contradiction in the public participation process. The Johari Window is a useful tool (Munro, Manthei & Small, 1979). A ‘window’ is used with four squares inside. This ‘window’ was devised originally for counseling as a technique for learning more about oneself. The top left hand square represents what is known between the client and the counselor. The bottom right hand square represents that neither client nor the counselor is aware of the situation. The remaining two squares represent the cases that either the client or the counselor knows.

Figure 12 The Johari Window

	Known to Self	Unknown to Self
Known to Others	<b>Free and Open:</b> You know and others know	<b>Blind Self:</b> You do now know but others do
Unknown to Others	<b>Hidden Self:</b> You know but others do now	<b>Unknown Self:</b> You do not know and others do not know

Source: Munro, E. A. , Manthei, R. J. & Small, J. J. (1979), *Counseling: A Skills*

This ‘window’ can be applied to community participation. It is used for investigating whether the communication between the authority and the public is effective. To be fitted for the case of public participation, the original Johari Window needs some slight amendment.

Figure 13 The Amended Johari Window based on the case of Public Participation

	Known to Public	Unknown to Public
<b>Known to the authority</b>	<b>Free and Open:</b> Both parties know	<b>Blind:</b> The authority knows but not the public
<b>Unknown to the authority</b>	<b>Hidden:</b> The public knows but not the authority	<b>Unknown:</b> Both parties do not know

*Source: Adopted from Munro, E. A. , Manthei, R. J. & Small, J. J. (1979), Counseling: A Skills*

Our target is to avoid the bottom right hand square but to achieve the top left hand one by using appropriate communication techniques and participation means. The vertical dividers should be shifted to the right while the horizontal one shifted to the bottom. In this way, the ladder of Arnstein's can be climbed up towards upper rungs.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Techniques to Promote Participation**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

Public participation is an empirical and social phenomenon. Empirical studies were common while literature and theoretical explanations and exploration into the ways to enhance public participation are said to be limited. Still, in this chapter, it is attempted to present some theoretical ways to enhance participation.

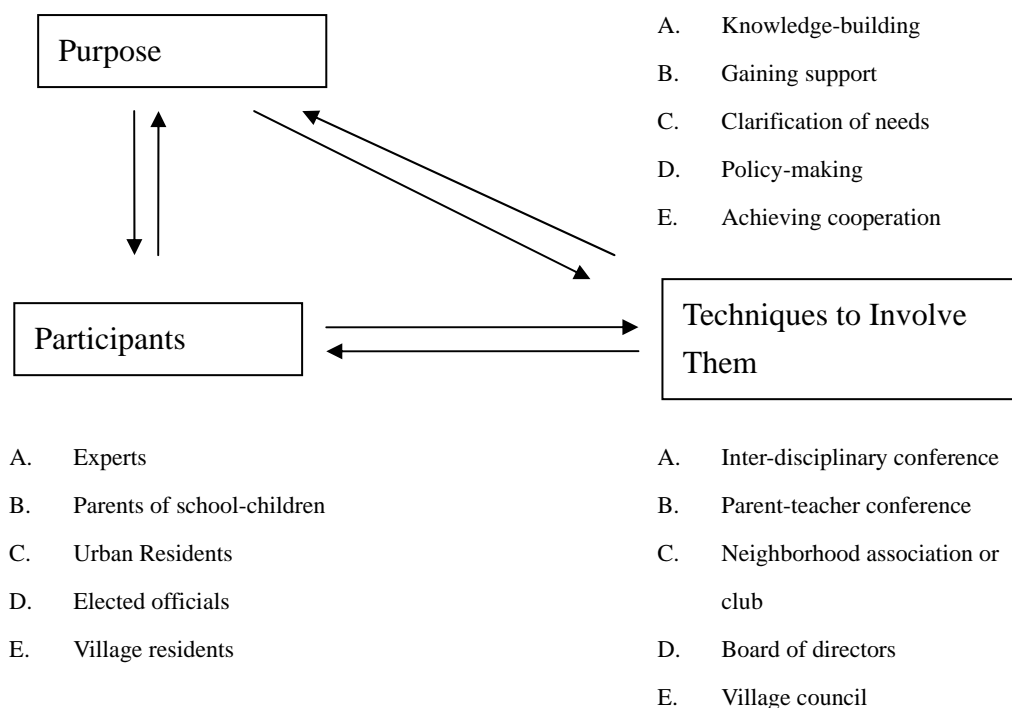
#### **6.2 The 3 Components of Participation**

Why do we have public participation in the urban renewal process, regardless of the increase in cost involved? Who should be the target among the public to be recruited in the decision making process? How should participation be carried out?

The above three questions ought to be raised and considered. In order to enable efficient public participation in the planning process, connections between three

components are important. Chetkov-Yanoov (1986) notes that the three components are why, who, and how of participation. The efficient interaction of them changes mere attendance into meaningful involvement

Figure 14 The Three Components of Meaningful Community Participation




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Source: Chetkov-Yanoov, B. (1986) *Participation as a Means to Community*

### *Cooperation*

The three components have to be logically interrelated and able to function

interdependently so that ongoing participation can evolve. In order to achieve knowledge-building (Situation A), an inter-disciplinary committee of professionals are appropriate. On the other hand, Situation C of the techniques, having participation of residents from a neighborhood association, may be the best for clarification of needs (Situation C). If any of the necessary components are missing, the process is short circuited. The cooperative community is very likely to break down. Yet, without preparing the former 'have nots' for the participation, it becomes the most shameless kind of manipulation. Participants who realize that they are being 'used' would become further disillusioned or explode in frustration. Thus, adult literacy-training and some interpersonal skills-development have to be included.

### 6.3 Defining the Relevant Publics

According to McArthur (1993), at the outset of a participatory programme, it is essential to define and understand the community upon which the initiative is to be based. As mentioned before, the public cannot be represented by 'one'. Attention has to be paid to 'extract' related public out of the mass.

Thomas (1995) raises the top-down approach and the bottom-up approach to define

the public.

### The Top-Down Approach

It starts off by the authority. In advance of public involvement, it begins by thinking broadly what types of citizens are likely to be interested and affected. Historical records and available lists of organized groups might be checked to identify groups that have shown interest previously in similar programmes.

While distinguishing interested public, distinction should be made between important and unimportant stakeholders. The consequence of being too exclusive in this initial definition is worse than being too inclusive.

### The Bottom-Up Approach

This approach is applicable for policies involving possible emergence of latent publics. The authority defines the public mainly by letting the public define itself. It is the contrary of the top-down approach. Public involvement is allowed to proceed and the authority observes what groups and interests emerge. In the meantime, the



authority adjusts the structure opportunities for more interest to show up.

It may give a sense of insecurity to the authority. In fact, the initial definition process can be separated from the actual decision making process.

#### 6.4 Enhancement of Capacity of the Community

Whether the public is ready for participating or not is a concern concurrently when we are focusing on techniques to involve them.

The very first step to achieve cooperative outcomes ought to be building trust. According to Chetkov-Yanoov (1986), building trust can be accomplished by sharing positive group experiences. As a group begins to evolve, more and more residents are attracted to it if it is interesting. A gradual increase of participation brings about personal and inter-personal growth, and the cohesion. As time goes on, a professional relationship between the community worker and local individuals and informal citizen groups would be developed. The worker helps relatively powerless citizens to organize themselves into groups, as well as improve their understanding of the external environment.

At the same time, we have to pay attention to the importance of giving attention both to member readiness for undertaking cooperative action and to their knowing-how to implement such an action. Litwin (1976) puts forward this idea by outlining the possibilities in an informative four-cell table:

Figure 15 Relations between Knowledge and Readiness

Know-how	Readiness	
	Present	Absent
Present	A	B
Absent	C	D

*Source: Levi, Y. and Litwin, H. (ed.) Community and Cooperatives in Participatory Development*

The authority has to be clear of which category the public begins to. As in Situation A, with the presence of both readiness and know-how, matters can be accomplished efficiently. In Situation D, the reverse is true. Situation B and C are amenable to well-planned repair. Regarding Situation B, people are technically competent but not read to cooperate. An unhurried process of community development is called for.

Participation mechanisms like committees or recreation clubs are to be encouraged.

Once they people feel ready, cooperative actions will be undertaken. Situation C is much more easily to be remedied. When know-how is lacking, training can be provided. Finding out which category the affected public belongs to is a prerequisite.

After the identification of category, the affected citizens can be evaluated to see if they possess quality required for public participation. Litwin (1986) raises out special characteristics that citizens possess in a successful participatory process.

The first one is the homogeneity of individuals. Without homogeneity, ethnic diversity restrained the development of the community cooperative.

Along with homogeneity, smallness has been cited as a prerequisite for an individual's involvement in participatory development. It means a sufficiently localized arena for participation which can allow the participant to sense his or her own presence, and to engage the others in a direct fashion.

However, continued cooperative activity will invariably experience an occasional clash between individual and communal interests. At such time, another feature has to

be present for participatory process. It is the willingness to place communal goals ahead of individual preference. To put it in another word, that is the readiness of the individual to recognize the legitimacy of the cooperative effort and to delay immediately personal gratification that may come at the expense of subsequent communal benefits.

By satisfying what Litwin (1986) mentions, efficient participatory progress is not guaranteed still. Yet, a big step forward is present for the goal of having public participation.

## 6.5 Evolvment of the Community

To achieve improvement for the community as a whole, continuously having experiential learning is essential for both the individual and organization levels, says Butcher & Robertson (2003).

*‘Experiential learning is learning that occurs in and through engagement with real day-to-day problems and issues. It takes places while planning to do something.’*

Dixon (1994) introduces a concept, known as ‘personal meaning structures’ (PMSs).

They are our own individual beliefs and about our world, ourselves and the relationship between the two. Our PMSs may affect us to adopt new ways to interact with the world. In our case of urban renewal, they play a vital role in affecting stakeholders and citizens. At the same time, the institution, Urban Renewal Authority (URA) is also affected.

Kolb (1984) suggests four distinct kinds of learning abilities for an effective experiential learner to possess. They are:

1. concrete experience abilities – to involve ourselves fully, openly and without bias
2. reflective observation abilities – to observe and reflect on our experiences from different perspectives
3. abstract conceptualization abilities – to create and use concepts integrating our observations into frameworks of theories
4. active experimentation abilities – to deploy our theories to aid decision making and solve problems

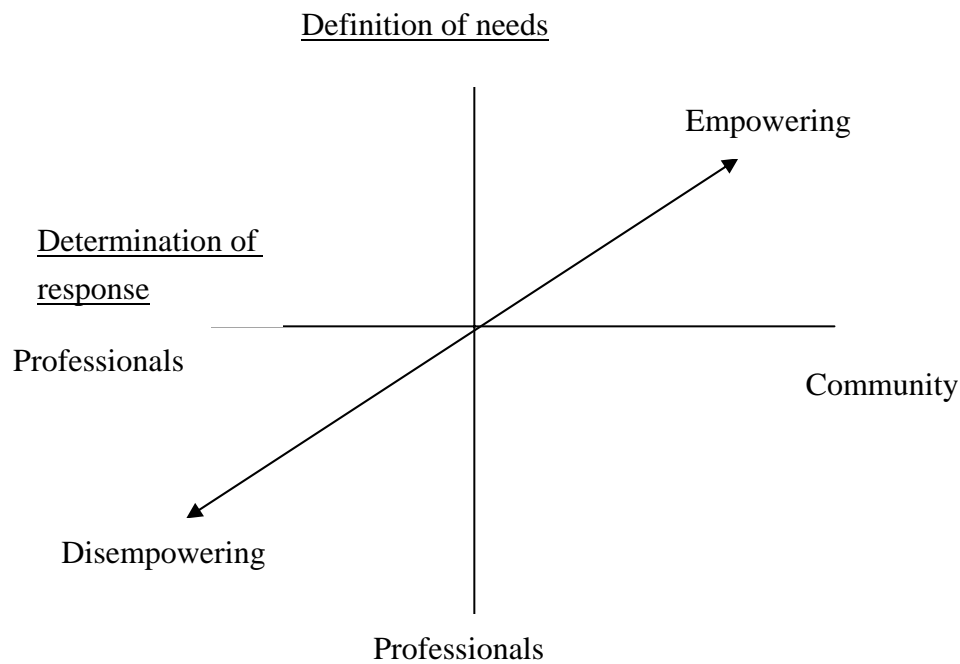
### 6.5.1 Empowerment

Empowerment, according to Conger (1989), can be regarded as the act of strengthening an individual's beliefs in his or her sense of effectiveness. It is not simply a set of external actions, but also changing the internal beliefs of people. If people lack the sense of their own effectiveness, it will be difficult for any kind of community participation to take place.

According to Barr (1995), empowerment might be seen as the degree to which or process by which disadvantaged communities define their own needs determinate response. As a community obtains more influence over the definition of their needs and more influence over the response to them, it is assumed that they are increasingly empowered. A simple diagram can be used to illustrate the idea.

A few points have to be added to the model. They are the shortcomings of the model and at the same time, being areas deserving attention regarding empowerment.

Figure 16 Simple Model of Empowerment



Source: Barr, A. (1995) *Empowering communities-beyond fashionable rhetoric? Some reflections on Scottish experience*, *Community Development Journal*,

Firstly, the model fails to recognize the complexities of satisfactorily defining communities. There are many different interests, relating to factors such as age, gender and race. Attention has to be paid to the recognizing of conflicts between the conflicts of interest between such disempowered people. Mediation is a prerequisite to empowerment.

The model demonstrates that empowerment is a 'zero-sum game' in which power is

seen as a finite entity and empowerment is about the transfer of it from one group to another. Yet, there may be alliances which are mutually empowering. The synergy arises when the authority's goal is compatible with that of the community.

Empowerment is a crucial element in the whole participatory process. It offers the public the confidence and the ability to participate in decision-making process. Yet, beforehand, we have to investigate whether the public suffers from the psychological damage of perpetual loss of hope and self-esteem. According to Marris (1986), this is extremely important. Mourning for what appears unattainable, yet is constantly projected by the media as normal, certainly disappoints the public. The authority must recognize the necessity of personal empowerment as empowerment's basis. In addition, it has to be aware that empowerment processes will potentially change the composition of communities. It creates a constant need to re-empower in a cyclical process.

However, ultimately, the authority can never empower the public because empowerment can only be achieved by the public themselves. The authority can only create the conditions for them, according to Barr (1995). Similarly, empowerment has to focus on relatively small numbers of people taking the leadership role, rather than



all the citizens.

In addition to empowerment, Schon (1987) suggests a crucial feature of the public in order to effectively participate. It is believed that humans reflect 'on' past action. It means we return to prior experience to construct new meaning. Schon (1987) raises the concept of reflection 'in' action. It enables us to observe 'concurrently' a situation and turn it over in our minds, while at the same time acknowledging its emotional impact on us, all in 'real time'. This kind of reflection is more common and of particular value to our renewal case, when the issue is ambiguous and full of uncertainty. It is a vital skill.

## 6.6 Features of 'Best Practice' in Public Participation

Participation is often an issue not backed by evidence from evaluative work. Rather, it is an empirical issue, requiring observations and practical advice.

### *Visioning*

Sanoff (2000) introduces the idea of 'visioning', which is a process to 'create living,

useful guides for public actions intended to position for the community for the future’.

Citizens are invited to think about how the community should be and to find ways to identify and work toward a community vision.

A large group of people, normally stakeholders, can be gathered in order to kick off the process, with informal brainstorming about what should be included in the community vision. Then, breaking into smaller groups comprising about seven, participants should discuss the ideas and present to the large group. In this way, common views become the direction of the vision and participants are responsible for the framework within which decisions are made.

Darke (2000) raises the idea that what constituting participation successful or not is not the merits of the tools. Rather, it is the way that the tools are used. In fact, citizens are canny. They will see when they are simply being asked to legitimate the authority’s schemes and when they are really being asked to make a contribution to the policy process. In order to have a satisfactory participation, planners have to be straight with people and be clear from the outset about what is open for full discussion, where policy can be changed, and what aspects of planning policy are already committed. The public should be integral to the policy process. Involvement of

citizens should never be treated as solely planners descending from offices into the local community by using a few randomly selected techniques for collecting or giving information.

### *Working out the Project Complexity*

Project complexity is what we have to find out ahead of any forms of public participation taking place. According to Abbott (1995), there are three set of indicators which describe project complexity.

The first relates to the nature of project. As in our present research area, it is urban renewal. This narrows down our discussion and it is not an area deserving wide coverage.

The second is the internal community dynamic. The notion of a community is always something of a myth. Abbott (1995) disagrees with the idea that community is a coherent entity with a clear identity. Rather, it is an agglomeration of factions and interest groups locked in competitive relationships. To achieve successful participation, the problem of community heterogeneity has to be overcome by

focusing on small groups, which are brought together through common interests.

Small group work can be a successful vehicle for acceptance of the project within the wide community.

The last is the interaction between the community project and the wider environment.

Whenever there are other actors involved, it is assumed that they are secondary and subservient to either government or community. When the situation becomes more of an international, and a wide national nature, then it becomes necessary to incorporate other actors into the decision-making progress.

Sited from Syme (1992), a number of features have been identified in conducting adequate public involvement programmes.

- a) The process of public participation should be agreed between the agency and participants.
- b) Public participation should start early in the decision-making process.
- c) The objectives of the public participation need to be clearly stated
- d) People need to be aware of the level of power being offered.
- e) Efforts should be made by the agency to identify all interested parties.

- f) Information should be freely available to all participants.
- g) Participants should know how their submissions will be processed.
- h) Where appropriate (e.g. for travel and large time commitments) costs for participants should be reimbursed.

Darke (2000) emphasizes that the authority should never offer a 'blank canvas' to the public, on which they could design the neighborhoods of their dreams. Such open-ended fantasies could never materialize.

Hampton (1977) suggests a 'schema of participation', outlining the three separate aims a good participatory process should comprise. The three aims are:

1. dispersing information to the public
2. gathering information from the public
3. promoting interaction between policy-makers and the public.

The third aim is the most crucial one. The authority should be pro-active when seeking the views of non-joiners, who are not members of any local organization.

## 6.7 Armstrong's Eight Elements

Armstrong (1993) suggests eight elements to successful community involvement in development. They are all drawn on United Kingdom experience of community involvement in major physical development schemes. They are good practical references for Hong Kong to make to in order to improve the current unsatisfactory level of public participation in the urban renewal process.

### Confident to Act

This idea is from President Kennedy. He urged people not just to ask the question 'Why?' but to go the next step and ask 'Why not?'. People need the confidence to ask "Why not create an alternative based on people's needs, experiences and vision?" Time is needed for the community to build up this confidence. In many case, it is fostered by a perceived threat to local community interests. Kruger (1993) also mentions the importance of restoring people's confidence and self-esteem in order to enable them to become active-agents.

### Community Development

Its role is very important in orchestrating the various elements of a successful approach. Involving local people, enabling them to take the initiative and empowering them are major tasks.

### A Multi-professional Team

Many components of complex local issues are to be involved. Success very much depends on the bringing together of a wide range of expertise and skills. The communities need to have access to the right help at the right time.

### Community Education

This is an integrated part of community development. It develops the community's critical awareness of the issues and the ability to answer questions. The development of both reflection and action are emphasized, so that action is well-informed by analysis and vice versa, creating a virtuous circle. A growing design literacy among community participants is to be created, so that they gain the confidence and skills to appraise design proposals and express their own preferences.

### Technical Aid

Technical aid should be available at the right time in and appropriate form, which does not take away the direction and control from the community. It is a vital element of the multi-professional team.

### Capacity Building

It is the deliberate building up of community strength and capacity to undertake increasingly demanding tasks. It can be regarded as the link between the process of community development and the development of specific community skills.

### Community Management, Community Benefit & Community Ownership

The three in a collective way means that community must have a full sense of ownership of the initiative and there is an appropriate system for community management for the initiative and the resources.

### Partnership



Most community development cases involve the establishment of partnerships between different organizations and different sectors such as the private, public, voluntary and community sectors. The partnership approach brings a much wider range of resources and skills to bear on an issue. Attention has to be paid to the equal relationship within the partnership. The community has to be aware that they have an equal stake rather than junior to the partnership.

After discussing the above eight features, politicians and decision-makers always have their own agenda for action. Armstrong (1993), based on his experience from United Kingdom, further raises a few priorities for them to consider for action.

Decision makers must hold recognition of the community involvement. All the parties involved in the process should also have such recognition. The Government can help by enacting legislations relating to the enforcement of public participatory programmes.

## 6.8 Practical Techniques for Use in HK

A number of participation methods are suggested by literatures. Generally, they are

divided into three categories. The ideas are extracted from Sanoff (2000) and Fong (2001).

*Awareness Methods:*

Exhibition

To inform and stimulate people to participate, exhibits in public places like shopping mall or a street fair is feasible. Fong (2001) mentions that in some foreign countries, exhibitions are held in order to comply with statutory requirements. There is no such law in Hong Kong. Yet, it is an efficient method for the public to know more since Hong Kong people are mall-hungry. Large-scale shopping malls are ideal places since the atmosphere is informal and more welcoming.

Publications

Nearly 92% of the population is literate. Information documentation such as newsletters, policy statements is used extensively. A method called 'responsive publication' was proposed by Jones (1990). It is both for data gathering and outreach, similar to a questionnaire but with slight difference. It is a printed page or two, with information about some issue in a neutral fashion, which also allows the person

receiving it to register some opinion about the issue.

### Walking Tours

Walking tours are nice for people to get together and get them doing something active.

Jones (1990) describes it as an effective introduction to a series of participatory process. Participants are to rediscover a familiar situation or to become acquainted with a new situation. Officials representing the authority can walk with them and ask the participants questions about the locality during the walk. Officials in Hong Kong tend to keep a distance from citizens. The socializing function of this technique acts as an ignition to narrow the gap between the two parties.

### *Indirect Methods*

### Surveys & Questionnaires

Surveys and questionnaires act as sound vehicles for the analysis of the views and preference of the citizens. Information gathering is a prerequisite for successful participatory process. By using the two, information can be obtained in a rapid and quantified manner. It is a one way flow of information. To avoid abandonment by citizens, fair response rate can be assured by dropping questionnaires off at homes,

securing a commitment from somebody who is there that it will be filled out, and then returning 24 hours later to collect them. This is feasible in the dense living environment of Hong Kong.

### *Interaction Methods*

#### Focus Groups

A focus group is a group of people coming together to focus discussion on a topic. It consists of about ten carefully selected people with a facilitator who guides the discussion to relevant issues. Cook (1998) lists four situations where focus groups may be helpful:

1. preparing for a survey to generate information for designing a questionnaire;
2. evaluating responses after a survey;
3. obtaining in depth information and identifying issues and the range of views;
4. generating and assessing planning options.

At the same time, it should be certain that homogeneity within groups and heterogeneity between groups are present.

*‘A City Centre for People’ in Sheffield, England, 1986*

A good example is the local plan entitled “A City Centre for People” taking place in Sheffield in England.

*Twelve advisory groups were identified, including women, young parents, elderly, people with disabilities, unemployed, low paid, young people, Asian and African-Caribbean groups. A wide range of community organizations were invited to nominate representatives for the 12 advisory groups meeting over a number of weeks.*

*Two planners were to be facilitators for each group. Funds were available for the groups to meet and carry out their own programme of fact-finding. They enjoyed total freedom in setting location, timing, agenda and nature of their meetings. At first, the planners explained to the groups the details of the draft plan and the policies. As the groups developed their own momentum, the planners shifted to the role of servicing the groups, such as collecting information.*

*The groups reported to a group of councilors from the Planning Committee in the form of ‘informal hearing’ with well-produced written and spoken presentations. The*

*suggestions were built into planning advice notes and briefings for developers.*

### Workshop

Through workshops, citizens engage in experiences that provide an opportunity for learning about human relations. They are planned events in which participants learn from each other as they explore the issues on hand. Workshops are the common settings for participatory techniques. A workshop comprises many parallel groups, with each group of five to nine people. In each group, there is a leader clarifying the members' roles and the group objectives of the workshop.

Opinions, biases and judgments have their places. Choice is allowed and input is encouraged. There are summaries during each session to allow the group to perceive what has been happening and to decide how to continue. Objectives would be agreed upon in the workshops. Then, a series of program alternatives can be developed. A final workshop can be set to discuss the alternatives and to reach agreement on the best solutions.

We have to make sure that the workshops do not turn into question-answer session.

### Charette

A charette operates simultaneously as a product and a process. It maximizes participation over a three-to-five-day framework. It is commonly used when the community has a sense of urgency about certain issues.

Smith (1999) offers a concise rundown of a charette. They are an event launch with introductions and briefings; a carefully planned walking trail to help citizens to understand the problems; topic workshops; design workshops focusing on options and proposals; and reports from workshop representatives followed by an open discussion or seminar.

A charette is really an intensive programme, providing the opportunity for collective wisdom and collaboration to generate alternatives. It is highly recommended to the renewal cases in Hong Kong.

In all, Wates (2000) recommends 22 principles as the basic ingredients in a public involvement programme. They set as good references for improvement in the current practice of the URA regarding public involvement:

1. Involve all those affected
2. Local ownership of the process
3. Plan your own process carefully
4. Agree on ground rules and boundaries
5. Quality not quantity
6. Involve all sections of the community
7. Spend money
8. Get value for money
9. Accept different agenda
10. Accept varied commitment
11. Be honest
12. Be transparent
13. Learn from others
14. Accept limitations
15. Use experts
16. Use outsiders carefully
17. Use facilitators
18. Be visual
19. Follow up
20. Maintain continuity
21. Have fun
22. 'Go for it'

### Fishbowl Planning

While achieving the 22 principles in participatory process, 'fishbowl planning' is also another feature deserving attention. The idea is raised by Sanoff (1999). He says that the main objective of 'fishbowl planning' is to ensure that planning for public works projects is highly visible to all interested individuals and organizations.

There are four procedural components of fishbowl planning. They are workshops,



public meetings, citizen committees and a brochure. The brochure is essential as it provides a written record of all the alternative solutions suggested by citizens. The essence of fishbowl planning is to improve communication between all concerned groups. It is certainly not a failure if consensus does not emerge.

## **Chapter 7**

### **From LDC to URA**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the main aim is to show the difference between Land Development Corporation (LDC) and Urban Renewal Authority (URA). Both LDC's and URA's renewal policies with the focus on public participatory measures are introduced. In this way, URA's new approaches to enhance public participation can be seen.

#### **7.2 Land Development Corporation (LDC)**

In 1987, the Hong Kong Government set up the Land Development Corporation (LDC). It was managed by a governing body made up of a Chairman, a Chief Executive, up to three public officers and not less than five non-public officers.

The aim of LDC was to rehabilitate urban dilapidated areas to realize their full potential. A sense of people-oriented belief was found as a socio-economic approach

was adopted. LDC did not only aim to rebuild. At the same time, it did so with a social conscience, bearing in mind the need to offer fair compensation, and the overall goal of enhancing the urban environment. Thus, LDC also stood for ‘Let’s Develop with Care’, according to its official publications. However, the operation of it from project planning to implantation was criticized for being bureaucratic. There was a lack of transparency, public participation and consultation. The centralized nature of policy formulation and implementation was the main cause. At the same time, LDC has a statutory obligation to conduct business according to prudent commercial principles, meaning that it was profit-oriented rather than social-oriented. A contradiction existed.

### ***7.2.1 How LDC worked?***

The Land Development Corporation Ordinance enacted in 1987, offered LDC the power to ‘prepare development proposals and implement such proposals’. Once the schemes proposed were approved by relevant authorities, it could ‘lease, purchase or acquire land’ by fair and reasonable means and terms.

A chart is drawn below to illustrate the preparation process by LDC to renew a district,

with referencing to the Land Development Corporation Ordinance.

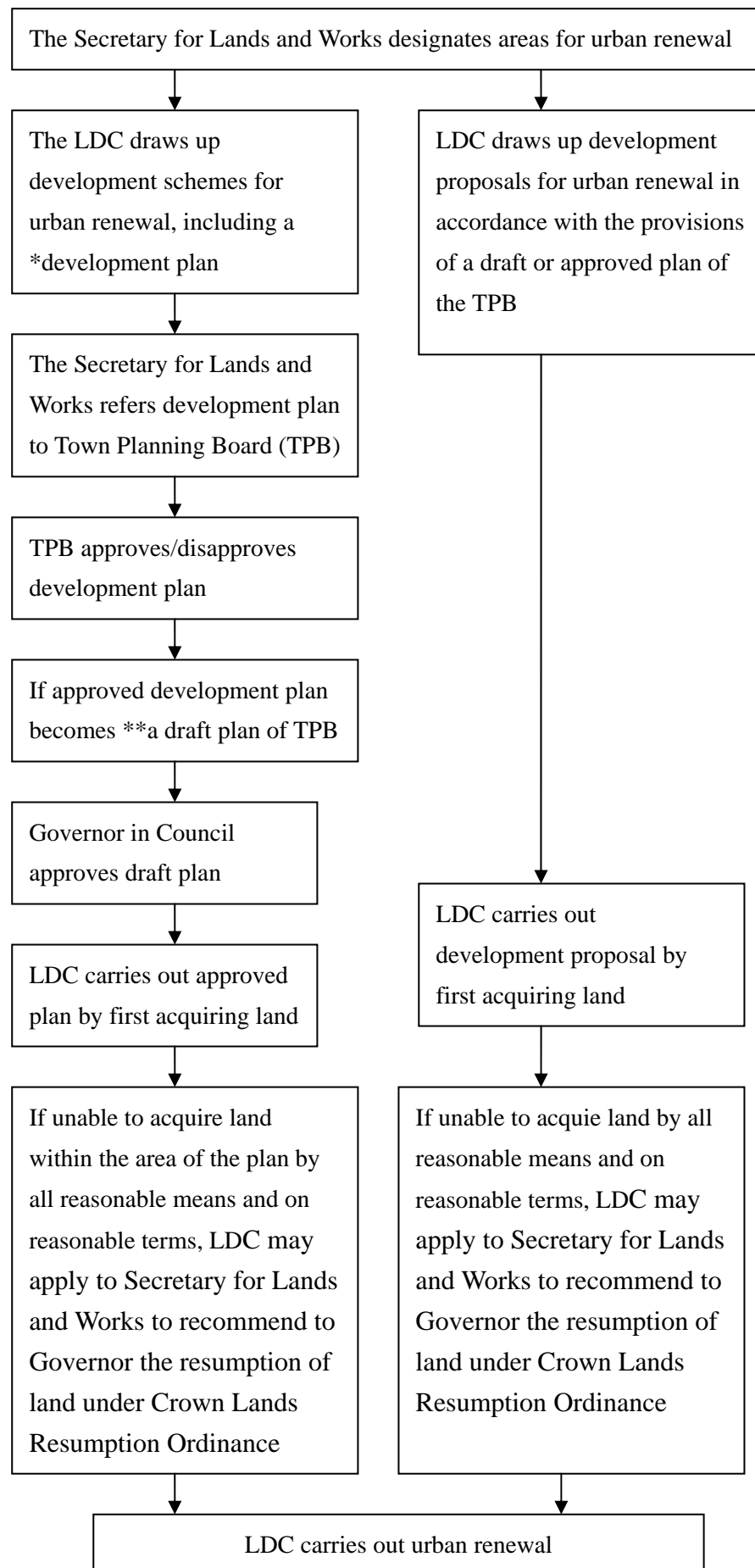


Figure 17 Chart Showing Procedure for Land Acquisition by LDC

*Source: Adopted from Land Development Corporation Pamphlet*

\*The development plan included an assessment by LDC as to the likely effect of the implementation relating to residential accommodation of persons who will be displaced by the scheme.

\*\*The plan approved by TPB becomes the draft plan. It was exhibited in the Gazette.

To have a closer look on the whole renewal process, we can view it into four major stages. They are the planning stage, consultation and decision-making stage, resumption stage and finally, the renewal stage.

Figure 18 Participation in the Case of Urban renewal conducted by the LDC

<b>Stages</b>	<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Participating Party(ies)</b>	<b>Means &amp; Level of Participation</b>
Planning	Land use planning;  Selection of sites;  Drafting of plans	TPD;  LDC.	Nil	Confidential  to the public.
Consultation and Decision-making	Inviting public opinion and receiving complaints/objections to the plan;  Judging the opinion and making decisions,  amendments to the	TPB;  TPD;  LDC.	DB/local organizations;  Affected residents;  General public.	Consultation.

	plan			
Resumption	Resumption of land/property;  Removal and compensation of the residents affected	LDC;  Property Surveyors; and Land Tribunal.	Affected residents (individual or as an organization).	Negotiation.
Renewal	Redevelopment of the sites	LDC(with partners);  Concerned Departments.	Affected residents.	Partners in development.

*Source: Chan, R. and Chow, P. (1996) Public Participation in Urban Renewal*

### *Limited Public Participation*

#### Planning Stage

In the planning stage, everything is kept as secret as possible. The reason given was to prevent undesirable property speculation especially when the potential profit for property development was high. Yet, the public was kept ignorant of the planning details until gazetted for public consultation.



## Consultation and Decision Making Stage

There is a formal public consultation to gather public views. Specified procedures are laid down in the Town Planning Ordinance for the public participation. Yet, at the end it is the Town Planning Board and the Governor in Council (Joint decision made by the Hong Kong Governor and the Executive Council) to decide on whether to decline or accept the public opinion and to suggest final amendments. The Town Planning Board also enjoyed the discretionary power to decide on which draft plan to be opened to public inspection.

Clearly, the public was hampered by a limited dissemination of information. In fact, the information was too technical and difficult for the public to understand. Although the public was able to express their opinion, the Town Planning Board and the government would be the one to have the final say in secrecy. It is because the Board could change the draft plan radically after the public consultation period without acknowledging the public. In addition, decision was made by closed boards with confidential papers and proceedings.

## Resumption Stage

In this stage, LDC started to reclaim properties from the owners or remove tenants from the sites. The owners could make their own choices to sell their properties or they can become partners in the redevelopment scheme and receive certain amount of profit after the sale of the redeveloped projects. This was known as the Owners' Participation Proposal (OPP). Yet, this OPP was eventually abandoned because no owners agreed to participate. Provided that there were conflicts, the issue would be brought to the Appeals Panel of LDC. Yet, the LDC could, as a last resort, referred the case to the government and employed the Crown Lands Resumption Ordinance to resume the land.

According to Chan and Chow (1996) and past experience, a majority of the conflicts occurred in this stage. Residents affected were often in a poor status to negotiate with LDC. They were inferior to the officials of LDC.

As mentioned before, LDC had to apply prudent commercial principle and work with private developers. In this way, it was hard to include stakeholders to participate.

### 7.3 Urban Renewal Authority

The Urban Renewal Authority (URA) was established on 1 May 2001 to supersede the Land Development Corporation (LDC). URA is entrusted with an enormous task of implementing a 20-year renewal programme, consisting of 200 new projects and 25 uncompleted LDC projects. To facilitate renewal works, nine targeted areas are designated, including:

- (1) Kwun Tong;
- (2) Ma Tau Kok;
- (3) Sai Ying Pun;
- (4) Sham Shui Po;
- (5) Tai Kok Tsui;
- (6) Tsuen Wan;
- (7) Wan Chai;
- (8) Yau Ma Tei; and
- (9) Yau Tong.

URA has the mission of creating quality and vibrant urban living in Hong Kong.

People-oriented approach is used. Significantly, its land development procedure is different from LDC's with a higher transparency for the public. A chart is drawn based on the Urban Renewal Authority Ordinance to reflect the process URA takes to renew an area.

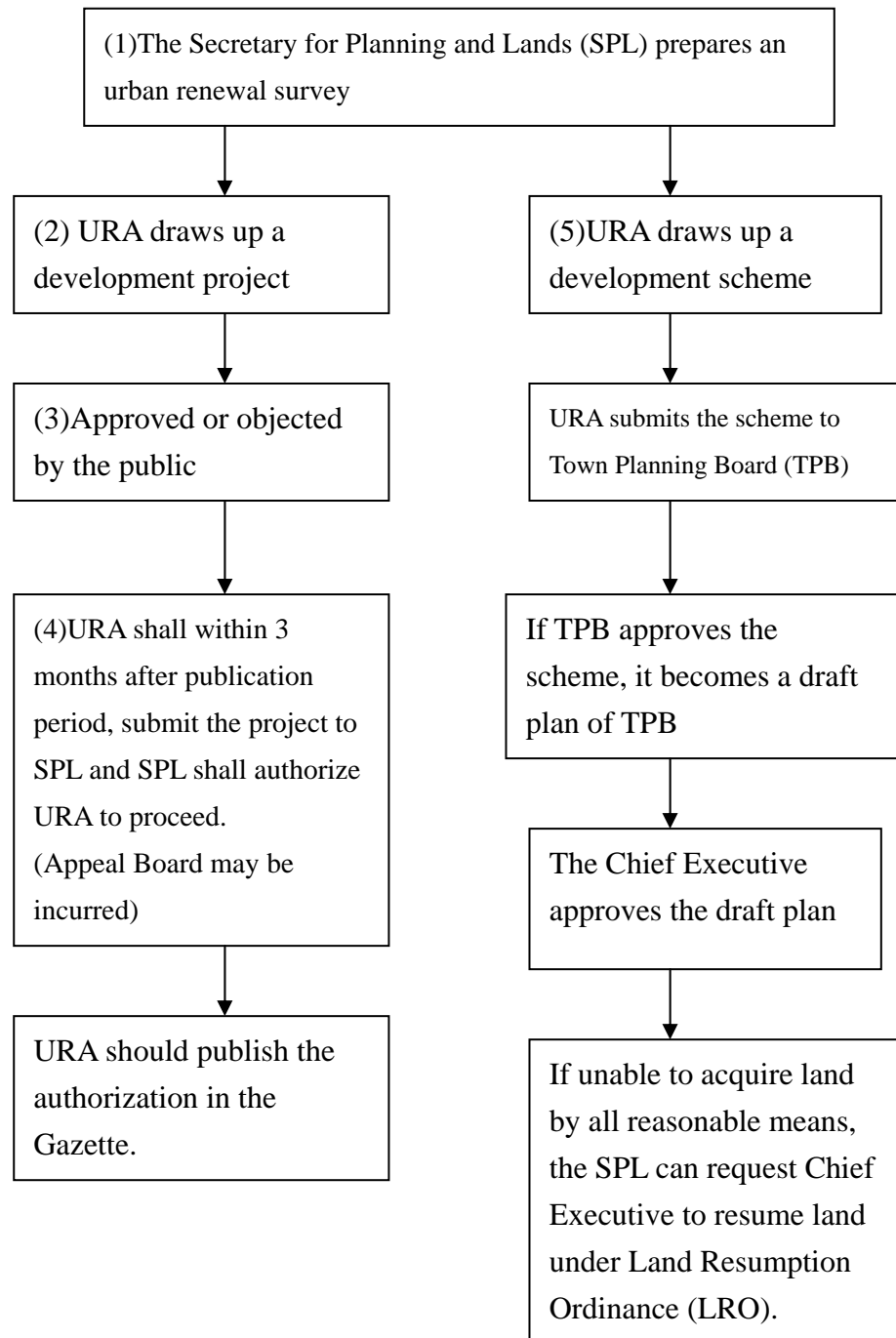


Figure 19 Chart Showing Procedure for Renewal by URA

- (1) The Secretary can choose to consult the public before finalizing the urban renewal strategy. He can choose not to do so if he considers that it is of an insignificant nature.
- (2) URA shall publish in each issue of the Gazette for 2 months. In doing so, information on the project is exhibited for public inspection.
- (3) Any person can send to the URA a written statement of his objections to the project.
- (4) An objector who is aggrieved by the Secretary's decision can lodge a notice of appeal within 30 days of the Secretary's decision. The hearing of an appeal shall be in public. The Board may consider whether a party should have access to documents, records or other exhibits.
- (5) No objection shall be entertained for projects implemented by way of a development scheme.

Figure 20 Participation in the Case of Urban Renewal conducted by URA

<b>Stages</b>	<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Responsible Party(ies)</b>	<b>Participating Party(ies)</b>	<b>Means &amp; Level of Participation</b>
Planning	Land use planning;  Selection of sites;  Drafting of plans	TPD;  URA.	Affected  stakeholders	The public  can lodge  objections.
Consultation and Decision-making	Inviting public opinion and receiving complaints/objections to the plan;  Judging the opinion and making decisions,  amendments to the plan	TPB;  TPD;  URA.	DB/local organizations;  Affected residents;  General public.	Consultation.
Resumption	Resumption of  land/property;  Removal and	URA;  Property  Surveyors;	Affected  residents  (individual or	Negotiation.

	compensation of the residents affected	and Land Tribunal.	as an organization).	
Renewal	Redevelopment of the sites	URA(with partners);  Concerned Departments.	Affected residents.	Partners in development.

*Source: Adopted from Chan, R. and Chow, P. (1996) Public Participation in Urban*

*Renewal*

### 7.3.1 How URA works?

#### **Planning Stage**

**This stage is the main improvement URA makes in the participatory aspect.** The

operation of URA is more open, transparent and with more public involvement.

Before the announcement of projects, URA conducts forums in several targeted renewal areas to collect the views from the residents and business operators.

Informative exhibitions are hold to highlight the details of the renewal project.

District Advisory Committees are set up with community representation to solicit views.



District Advisory Committee (DAC) in the nine target areas are developed, with representatives from District Council's members, non-government organizations (NGOs) and stakeholders. Urban renewal services teams with professional social workers are set up to provide assistance and counseling services to residents affected. The above measures help assess the social needs of residents.

In order to expedite the urban renewal programme, new planning procedures have been introduced for processing URA projects. The URA may implement a project by way of a development project or a development scheme. The public can lodge objections to a development project under the Urban Renewal Authority Ordinance or to a development scheme under the Town Planning Ordinance. Procedures are in place to process such objections. Yet, in general, URA decides all the issues such as implementation approach and compensation package and the public have no say. The final determination of the community needs still rests on the hand of URA rather than the affected community. The need to re-establish the community ties is ignored.

A social impact assessment would be carried out before the project being published in the Government Gazette. The URA uses this assessment as a means to fully assess the

social impact of a proposed project and the social and rehousing needs of the residents affected.

URA is a statutory public body under the direction of its Managing Board. Yet, the Board is still dominated by the elite groups, with only one representative from the grass-root (Mr. Li Wah Ming of the Democratic Party) and with no representatives from the community organizations. There is still the problem of vested interests and bias in the decision making process.

#### Consultation and Decision Making Stage

The URA is required to publish in the Government Gazette the commencement date of the implementation of a project (development project or development scheme) and to exhibit general information about the project for public inspection. The URA should hold public meetings to inform local residents of its projects and to gather public views on them. It should also consult the concerned District Council on the project. Easy-to-understand pamphlets should also be printed for distribution to persons affected.

#### Resumption Stage

In this stage, URA started to reclaim properties from the owners or remove tenants from the sites. The owners could make their own choices to sell their properties or they can become partners in the redevelopment scheme and receive certain amount of profit after the sale of the redeveloped projects.

If unable to acquire land by all reasonable means, the SPL can request Chief Executive to resume land under Land Resumption Ordinance (LRO). When resumption order is granted from the Executive Council, negotiation with affected owners will stop and the Lands Tribunal will decide the acquisition price based on the comparable seven-year-old units in the same districts.

#### *Implementation Stage*

*Under URA Ordinance, it is guided by the URS prepared by SPL. The URA needs to operate within the parameters and guidelines set out in URS. PLB has conducted several large scale public consultation programs to collect public opinions for the formulation of the URS. The public does have the chance to provide insights to guide the operation of URA. Under section 23 of URA ordinance, before implementing a project, URA is required to publish in the Government Gazette the commencement date of the project and to exhibit general information about the project for public inspection. The public is informed of what URA is supposed to do.*

In fact, similar to LDC, URA contains hierarchical structure and top-down management approach. The Managing Board at the top acts as the decision making body, with the supervision from Managing Director. Downward vertical communication dominates, with the Managing Board giving direction to Managing Director and he regulates the operational divisions.

Because of the top-down implementation, the adoption of public opinion depends much on the attitude of members of Managing Board. No community representatives are found in the Managing Board.

## **Chapter 8**

### **Research Design**

#### **8.1 Introduction**

This chapter is going to discuss the research design for this study. The reasons for having the following research method are presented and explained. Besides, the layout and design of the questionnaire is explained.

#### **8.2 The Research Method**

Two main research methods are found, which are interviews and questionnaires.

##### *Interviews*

Public participation is a social phenomenon. To get a well-round picture of the public participatory situation in our case study, it is inappropriate to get information from just one party. Rather, information should be got from different parties, so as to show

a wider and more comprehensive picture with the cross-validation. Furthermore, some information ought to be obtained from officials from URA, such as participatory practice launched by URA in the case study area.

Three interviews were carried out. The first one was carried out with Mr Lau, Contract Manager of Housing Society. In this interview, insight was gained about the general picture of urban renewal in Hong Kong and the obstacles of enhancing public participation. The second interview was with Mr Wan, who is the District Councilor of Kwun Tong. He is also a member of the District Advisory Committee of Kwun Tong Town Centre Project (our case study). He provided precious information about the Kwun Tong community and how the residents behave generally. Cross validation was made with him about the URA's public participatory measures. It was proved that the measures do exist. The third interview was with Mr Wan, Director of Property and Land of URA. Participatory measures launched by URA in the district were told by him.

Transcribing and analyzing of the content of conversations are the main ways to analyze results from the three interviews.

*Questionnaire*

Questionnaires were distributed to the Kwun Tong residents living within the renewal area. By 'within the renewal area', it means the area enclosed by the boundary in pink color in the map, as shown in Appendix IV. The total population affected by the Kwun Tong Town Center Project, which also means the total population residing and being engaged in business in the pink boundary shown in the map, is 5,000 people with about 1,600 property interests. In total, 80 questionnaires were filled in by respondents. All the questionnaires were filled in by the researcher's in-person approaching respondents in random. They are either shop keepers or pedestrians living within the area. They were all approached individually because of the necessity for the researcher to explain and elaborate the questions to them so as to make sure they understood before answering the questions. Questionnaire is chosen as a means to collect information from the residents because questionnaire survey from a sample is reflective of the opinion of the population. It is impossible to obtain all information from the population, comprising more than 5,000 people. In addition, using questionnaire to collect data is an efficient way since data can be collected in a short period of time. This also provides the researcher with the chance to interact with respondents and explain to them about the aim and details of the questionnaire.

### 8.3 Layout of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire is divided into 3 parts.

**Part One (Question 1-5)** of the questionnaire investigates if the respondents have heard of the five participatory measures. This part echoes Learning Objective 2, to see if the approaches are effective. Knowing whether the citizens know about the approaches is the very first step. This sets as a preliminary snap shot of the upcoming questions which in a deeper manner explore the participatory willingness of them.

**The second part of Part One (Question 6-10)** is for Learning Objective 2 as well, to see if the approaches are effective. Respondents are asked to tick whether the five approaches are very effective, effective, moderate, having little effect, or no effect. To get a more reliable picture of the real situation, asking them directly in such a way should not be the only means to assess if the approaches are effective or not. Thus, questions are also set with reference to Literature Review on the features of good participatory measures suggested by Sanoff (2000), Darke (2000), Syme (1992) and Hampton (1997). Respondents are asked if the features are present in the reality by showing the level of agreeing or not to statements given.



**Question 11-15** is for investigating the Learning Objective One, which is to find out if the respondents have the intention to participate in the planning stage of renewal. These 5 questions of Part One also investigate whether the respondents think the measures are effective or not. Unlike the previous questions which ask the respondents directly about the effectiveness, these five questions use an indirect approach, having questions set with elements extracted from Literature.

The respondents were asked to rate each measure in terms of their effectiveness levels on a five-point scale. The continuum ranges from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree' (see Appendix 1). The statements set are all positive ones relating to effectiveness of participatory measures. The more the extent that respondents agree with the statements (the higher marks given), the more effective the measures are.

Question 11 relates to Sanoff (2000)'s idea of 'visioning', which is a process providing guides for public actions intended to position the community for the future. Citizens are invited to think about how the community should be and to find ways to identify and work toward a community vision. Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement to Sanoff's idea of visioning.

In Question 12, respondents were asked if they feel that they are really being asked to make a contribution to the planning process. This idea originates from Darke (2000). His idea is that it is essential that citizens are not just simply asked to legitimate the authority's schemes. They have to be asked to really make a contribution to the process. Whether the citizens feel and agree that they are integral to the policy process is very important.

Question 13 is also originates from Darke (2000). Planners should never be treated as just descending from offices into the local community by using a few randomly selected techniques for collecting or giving information. The question is a statement that the idea of the planners descending from offices is NOT applicable to the Kwun Tong situation. If the respondents give a higher rate, it means they are more satisfied with the present situation.

Question 14 asked whether the respondents are clear about how their submissions would be processed by URA. Syme (1992) identifies this feature as essential for an adequate public involvement programme. Participants, even if given the chances to take part, should be aware of how their precious comments would be treated and taken into account by the officials.

Question 15 is originated from Hampton (1977). He suggests a 'schema of participation', outlining what a good participatory process should comprise. Promoting interaction between policy makers and the public is an essential feature stated by him. Respondents were asked to rate if they agree this is present in the reality.

These five questions making reference to literature are set as kind of supplement to the previous five questions, asking the respondents directly to rank the level of effectiveness they regard for the five participatory measures. The result would not be accurate enough if just solely depends on the direct asking. Thus, the five questions making reference to literature are set. They are extracted from literature after considering the ease of understanding for the public. Since this is a questionnaire for the general public, no difficult and specific terms should be used. Therefore, only part of the literature is extracted for setting the questions.

**Part Two** (Question 16-20) is for investigating the Learning Objective One, which is to find out if the respondents have the intention to participate in the planning stage of renewal. Questions in this part are set mainly by making reference to information got from interviews with URA official and Kwun Tong District Councilor. Respondents

are asked to choose whether they strongly agree, agree, being neutral, disagree or strongly disagree about statements depicting their potential thoughts.

The respondents were asked to rate each measure in terms of their effectiveness levels on a five-point scale. The continuum ranges from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree' (see Appendix 1). Questions are set with statements depicting the scenario assumed, which is also our hypothesis that citizens lack the intention to participate in the planning process of urban renewal. This is set based on the results got from interviews with the Kwun Tong District Councilor and URA official.

Question 16 is a statement that respondents are not interested in the planning process of the renewal project in Kwun Tong. The more respondents agree to it (the higher the scores given), the more applicable this statement is to the Kwun Tong Town Centre Project.

Question 17 further assumes that respondents care only about the financial matter regarding compensation for their properties resumed by URA. Together with Question 18, which states that the citizens disagree with the importance of affected residents playing a role in the pre-renewal stage, they further depict our hypothesis that citizens

do not care much about the participation in planning process.

Question 19 and 20 also contain statement assuming that citizens do not want to waste time on attending consultation activities organized by URA. They have little confidence to provide valuable advice for the renewal project.

### **Part Three – Question 21-25**

This part is set to have a glimpse of how to improve the future participatory measures in a better way. Questions are set with reference to literature regarding the benefits of public participation. If respondents give high rates to show their agreement to the statements, it means that they welcome the benefits brought about by participatory measures. On the contrary, it would mean that they are already satisfied with the current situation. This should be made clearer before setting the next step to promote public participation.

Question 21 is based on Hampton's (1977) idea of 'enhancing citizenship' and a broader democratic objective. If a decision with public support is needed, a public solving climate has to be developed, involving public participation in the early

decision process. Public is to be drawn into a stronger relationship with the government and thus enhancing their future ability to play a significant role in policy-making.

Question 22, making reference to Cook et al (1997), is a statement that participatory mechanism helps keep authorities honest and perform their duties more sensitively.

The authorities would make more sensible decision because of the elite ideas got from the public. Better coordination, higher levels of trust and confidence among residents and officials can also be brought about.

Question 23 is the idea of Hain (1980). He raises that public participation is a rebirth of the self-governing community which might give the citizen a sense of place, which is lacking in the contemporary society. Citizens have a desire for the maximum feasible power for minimum feasible areas, meaning they want small face-to-face-groups. Participation is also a means to combat the exclusion of the poor from the political system. It springs out of an estrangement from the conventional structure of representative democracy. Whether there is a genuine attempt to achieve democracy is a major concern. A good participatory measure definitely helps in this aspect.

Question 24 asks if the respondents regard themselves capable of identifying problems so as to assist the officials to arrive at better solutions for a better planning.

This capability is very important, according to Sanoff (2000). The two parties, which are the public and the authority, should own different expertise. While the authority should own the knowledge to solve problems, the public should identify problems.

The collaboration helps avoid misunderstanding between the two parties.

Question 25 is based on Mok's (1988) idea. According to Mok, citizen participation achieves a range of objectives, including the strengthening of citizen's capacity for self-determination, self-actualization and problem-solving. A number of indigenous community leaders who possess the capacity to undertake political negotiation can also be generated.

## **Chapter 9**

### **Interview**

#### **9.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the three interviews with Mr Lau (Housing Society), Mr Chan (Kwun Tong District Council) and Mr Wan (Urban Renewal Authority) are presented. Transcribing is the way to analyze results from the interviews. The details of the interviews are to be recorded in this chapter, with the main points underlined.

#### **9.2 Interview with Mr Lau, Housing Society**

An interview was held with Mr Lau, Contract Manager of Hong Kong Housing Society on 16<sup>th</sup> February, 2006 in his office.

The Hong Kong Housing Society (HS) and the Urban Renewal Authority (URA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on 12 December 2002 to enter into a long term strategic partnership for the implementation of urban renewal projects.



Therefore, apart from URA, we can also take a glimpse of the participatory measures involved in renewal projects from HS.

#### Concern for Public Participation

Regarding public participation, the Housing Society will follow the URA's existing practice of providing professional service with social service teams to take care of the needs of the aged residents and others who may be in need of special care.

While HS implements projects, it assumes that URA carries out certain functions, such as conducting surveys and interviews for identifying rehousing needs of residents.

The details of this interview are recorded as below, Regarding the core part of this dissertation, which is concerning public participation measures, the parts are underlined.

How do URA and HS implement renewal projects in general? Is there any difference

between the two organizations?

*As for the URA, renewal projects take place mainly by joint venture with private developers.*

*HS mainly carried out renewal projects through Urban Improvement Scheme in the past. The whole process was carried out by HS alone, without any developers involved. Therefore, heavy investment with large cost involvement was found.*

*Normally, the main obstacle is found in the acquisition process. Social Service Team is established within the renewal area to provide counseling service for residents who are reluctant to move out. The Team also provides information for those having queries on the process of renewal. Provided that there is further problem on acquisition, the most frequent one being parties reluctant to move out, HS makes use of the last resort, which is the Urban Renewal Authority Ordinance (URAO) to exercise enforcement to vacant the property.*

*URA cooperates with HS in some designated districts' renewal projects mainly because of the small potential project involved. There are even some extreme case which are financially non-viable. Projects taken up by HS are mostly for the*

*well-being of the community instead of gaining profit. Speed of the projects is also normally more rapid.*

How do you view the opportunity for the public to participate in the renewal process?

*A very small extent of public participation is involved. There are several reasons.*

*Firstly, citizens have different perspectives and high expectations while resource in the society is limited. The financial commitment to fulfill citizens' wishes is so large that the society may not be able to afford.*

*Secondly, public participation involves gathering of comments from residents involving in the planning process. It may bring about false signal to owners and tenants. There is the potential risk that after gathering their comments, their viewpoints would not be fulfilled at last. This creates false signal to the public.*

*Thirdly, and the most importantly, there is potential risk of leaking the news of implementing renewal project. This may attract outsiders to move in so as to cheat for compensation.*

In fact, public consultation does exist, but only to a small extent, including meetings to explain the details of the renewal projects to the owners and tenants. But, in general, no views are gathered for the planning process because of the viability of views from citizens.

*In fact, there is a special feature of the urban renewal in Hong Kong. Urban renewal is normally done in a piecemeal manner, without substantial impact brought to the society as a whole. A good example is Langham Place in Mongkok. Apart from that modern complex development, you can still witness many old and run-down buildings nearby.*

*Hong Kong is not with high-power administration or with a very promising market that substantial increase in property prices can be found. In addition, there is a lack of resources for redevelopment in this low-tax economy.*

### 9.3 Interview with Mr Chan, Kwun Tong District Councilor

A short interview was held with Mr Chan in his office at Yue Man Mansion, 15 Hong Ning Road, Kwun Tong on 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2006.

Mr Chan is, besides the Kwun Tong District Councilor elected by the residents, also a member of the District Advisory Committee (DAC) of the Kwun Tong Town Centre Project. He is actively involved in the renewal job, particularly the aspect of public participation. At the same time, he is actively involved in Kwun Tong Resident Union as the Head of Publication, which also aids the collection of public opinion in the planning of the renewal project for URA. *He is an extremely good party acting as a neutral figure biasing neither for the URA nor the public, according to what he said.*

From this interview, information obtained forms reference for the setting up of questionnaires distributed to the residents living within the renewal area. The details of this interview are recorded below, with significant points underlined. In all, the main aim of this interview was to have a glimpse of the feature of Kwun Tong community, which is crucial for the direction of setting up the questionnaire

objectives. The five participatory measures taken by URA and mentioned by URA official, Mr Wan, in this area were also cross-validated with him during the interview, in order to make sure the existence of the measures.

Having long-term relationship and experience working along with the Kwun Tong community, what is your opinion about some special features of the residents?

*It is recognized that residents in general do not have much intention to get involved in the planning and consultation stage. Efforts have to be paid to raise their interest to care about the renewal project because of their passiveness. In 2002, questionnaires were distributed to the public and consultation held to make them aware of their rights, how they can be benefited. Also, they were told their role in the whole renewal project, which is a say in the planning and consultation process. Yet, overall, they need further education and guidance on the participatory role designated to them.*

Are there any participatory measures organized to enhance the residents' interest in taking part in the planning and consultation process of this renewal project?

*The Kwun Tong Resident Union has been organizing talks to make residents be aware*

*of their rights and how they can be benefited by the renewal project. The aim is to make sure that they understand their role in the whole renewal process, having the power to participate in the planning stage.*

*Yet, the reality is that the residents mostly lack readiness.*

Is there any technical aid supporting those residents who generally are not educated to a high level?

*At present, there is no technical aid, with professionals' guidance to the public. The district organizations see no need for the launching of this simply because of the lack of readiness of the public, not to mention know-how. As mentioned in the above paragraphs,*

As suggested by Syme (1992) in the Literature part regarding features contributing to efficient public participation, the process of public participation should be agreed between the agency (URA) and the participants. Do you think this process exists in this project?

There exist no such prior agreement between the URA and the public. Rather,

interactive approaches with flexible measures are promoted. Exploratory methods are adopted in general, each step formulated depending on previous results gained. The ultimate goal of both URA and our District Advisory Group is to set a goal for this renewal project. This goal is of utmost importance as it acts as a basis for the upcoming design of it.



#### 9.4 Interview with Mr Wan, URA

An interview was held with Mr Wan Shiu Wah, William, Director of Property and Land of Urban Renewal Authority on 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2006 in URA's office in Sheung Wan. This interview forms a crucial channel to know the details of the participatory measures taken by URA in Kwun Tong Town Centre Project. Information gathered in this interview assists the design and setting up of questionnaires distributed to the Kwun Tong community within the renewal area. In addition to the participatory measures and URA's attempts in Kwun Town Town Centre Project, Mr Wan shares his viewpoints about the features of this renewal project and also political elements involved.

The details of the interview are recorded below, with the significant points underlined.

How does URA generally get involved in participatory means for the Kwun Tong public?

*Public participation is made present by Community Engagement Process. Throughout*

*the process, URA takes a proactive role in identifying issues which are worth paying attention to in the planning of the renewal project. Not only stakeholders, but also adjoining parties in the wider Kwun Tong area, are the target to be involved in participatory measures. Getting the Kwun Tong community's aspiration is the major concern for URA.*

What are the main participatory measures taken in Kwun Tong Town Centre Project?

*Kwun Tong District Advisory Committee (DAC) plays a vital role in the whole participatory scheme. Represented by LegCo Councilors, District Councilors together with some social groups in Kwun Tong, youth association, association made up of market stalls and resident groups, they are part of the proactive approaches by URA.*

*Community Design Workshop is another significant step taken. Under the organization of DAC, workshop is a significant tool in order to take forward the transparent process of 'design' for the community. Views from various sectors of the participants are gathered so as to express their views on the preliminary design concept for the redevelopment, which can in turn provide a basis for the future preparation of Master Layout Plan for the submission to the Town Planning Board for*

approval. During the process of design workshop under the leadership of the District. Advisroy Committee, 3-D computer model has been utilised to facilitate the participants to draw up instantly concept sketches for the design option they prefer. At the same time, penetration into the public for more insights and views towards the the scheme is achieved by having 'road shows' with exhibition and briefing sections sessions with the concerned parties and the general member of the public who are interested in the subject.

An on-site Neighborhood Community Centre is set up so as to distribute and receive information about the renewal project and offers an efficient and direct communication channel for the public. The Centre, acts as a point of contact between the URA and the residents in Kwun Tong with on site staff providing full-time point of contact between URA and the public.

Social Service Team is set up with social workers to visit affected resident particularly the needy. The aim is to see if there are hardship cases requiring special attention from URA. Some of them may even not be aware of resumption of their properties and how to relocate themselves. It may be the very first time for some to move out of the residence as well. Some ethnic minorities may also require consultation and assistance, for their lack of attention by the community and their unique social status.

*The Social Service Team aims to offer assistance to those affected at their doorsteps.*

*Another main measure is consultation meetings. There have been two such kinds of meetings taking place. The format was mainly question-answering so as to clear the public's queries.*

#### *Community Aspiration Survey*

*A University of Hong Kong research team, led by HKU professor Law Chi-kwong, has been commissioned by URA to carry out a wide-ranging and large-scale community aspiration survey in the wider Kwun Tong area. The survey is to examine the aspirations of people from all walks of life, including residents and visitors. Their views would be assessed to see how they should be reflected in the future design and planning of the new town centre. 1,300 members of the public will be randomly selected for interviews.*

*By the survey, it is hoped that an innovative and efficient way of involving the public into the planning process can be fulfilled. Parameters are to be set after the survey's result. Then, the preliminary design of the Kwun Tong Town Centre Project is to be produced with the parameters taken into account. This design, containing the public's*

*views, would then be for general public consultation. The major feature outweighing the former practice of ignoring the public's advice in the preliminary design stage is that parameters are to be sorted through survey among the wider Kwun Tong area. This is to ensure that aspirations of them are considered in the design.*

*Monthly Newsletter*

*The URA is going to publish monthly newsletter, acting as a bridge between URA and the public (particularly the affected residents) throughout the whole renewal project. Provided that anybody has advice and queries about certain matters, he can turn to Neighborhood Communication Centre for ways to express opinion.*

*This is a significant channel for URA to be constantly in touch with the public, making sure that the public gets access to first-hand and correct information of the renewal project. It is common for the busy residents to prefer representation by local groups instead of playing a role directly in the consultation activities organized by URA. In order to avoid the possibility of confused or misinterpreted information communicated by local groups to the affected, URA produces the newsletter to transmit accurate news of the renewal project to the residents. This is a big leap forward after lessons learnt regarding public participation in the previous renewal*

*projects*

*Walking tours are organized to enhance the public's understanding and the inclusion of their viewpoints in the design, walking tours, together with seminars, have been organized. The general public was invited to join the URA officials to get around the renewal area, with the chance to express their opinions.*

*Yet, residents are found to be quite dependent upon local groups. There was not much direct participation by them in the walking tours. Rather, they were mostly represented by groups. One-sided views became unavoidable and bias information may be channeled through the groups back to the residents.*

*There was no prior announcement to the Kwun Tong residents of what our upcoming participatory measures would be. Our approach, as mentioned, is rather proactive and flexible. Proper measures appropriate for the time being would be incorporated. We plan to have flexible means, considering different parties emerging and the response from the public.*

What are the features of the Kwun Tong Town Centre Project, affecting participatory

measures?

*There exist special features of Kwun Tong, affecting how the real participatory situation is.*

*Kwun Tong is a district without much heritage. Unlike other projects, such as Lee Tung Street in Wanchai, there is not much to be preserved. Not much political element associated with heritage, collective memory and community ties have been so far involved either.*

*Like most of the other normal residents, the Kwun Tong affected ones mainly are concerned about compensation and time of acquisition matters. The major, and perhaps the only, vital factors affecting them seems to be financial matters. In workshop, they have no special resentment to high buildings with sensible ideas from the economic point of view, in consideration of the availability of large open space and community facilities. Participating residents are mainly from some concern groups within the district, having a tendency of relying on the groups instead of participating on their own.*

*On the other hand, residents not immediately affected by the project, who mainly live in adjoining areas, pay more attention to the planning element. Their properties are not within the renewal area. Thus, they are not entitled to enjoy compensation from URA simply because their properties are not to be acquired or resumed. Their attention is normally shifted to the planning and design elements of the project, which directly affect their living environment and daily necessities such as public transport interruption once the renewal project commenced .*

#### Political Element

*Is genuine public participation feasible, under the current political situation in Hong Kong? There are politicians who may have some hidden agenda, playing an active role in renewal projects. Some politicians including Legislative Councilors and District Councilors, are playing an active role in Kwun Tong Town Centre Project, making use of the public participatory elements in the renewal project.*

*Public Participation in Hong Kong attracts political elements to intricate in between. In some cases this may even lead to a compromise for the real economic benefits of renewal projects.*



*In all, the social cost and price to pay for public participation process could be very substantial. On one hand this process may generate a positive outcome by bringing better awareness to the affected. On the other hand, the process would procrastinate a genuinely good plan to be implemented or even scrap a high-value proposal at the infancy stage for the mere reason of political considerations. How much social gain can such a process bring about deserves our thorough debate and calls for further investigation by our society.*

## **Chapter 10**

### **Data Analysis**

#### **10.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, a brief analysis of the findings from questionnaires is to be made. This is to provide readers with a brief picture of the findings from surveys with the Kwun Tong residents living within Kwun Tong Town Centre Project. This paves way for the detailed discussion in Chapter 11.

#### **10.2 Analysis Method**

The respondents are asked to rate each variable, to see if they agree to the statement and their views about the effectiveness of the five participatory measures used by URA in Kwun Tong Town Centre Project.

##### Visual Aids

As for the part of effectiveness of the participatory measures, which is the former part (Question 1 – Question 10) of Part One, visual aids are to be used to demonstrate the

findings. Pie charts are the main media to demonstrate the respondents' know-how of the existence of the five measures and how they rate their effectiveness. Simple visual aids are used in this part because the main aim of this former part of Part One of the questionnaire is to present a picture of how much the respondents are aware of the measures. '

#### Weighted Average Index (WAI)

Visual aids are not used for the analysis of the remaining part of the questionnaire. Thus, weighted average index (WAI) is used to analyze the latter part of Part One (Question 11-15), Part Two and Part Three. Responses for each question range from  $j$  to  $n$ , which represent the continuum of the five-point scale. A five-point scale is used as a continuum representing 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. A score,  $s$ , is given to each response category where scores are: strongly disagree = 0; disagree = 25; neutral = 50; agree = 75; strongly agree = 100.

The weighted average index (WAI) is calculated by the following formula:

$$WAI = \frac{\sum_j^n ps}{\sum_j^n p}$$

where  $p$ =percentage of respondents who express an opinion.

### Correlation Coefficient

Correlation coefficients are computed to know how the variables are related to each other. The two-tail test is employed as the direction of relationship is unknown. In the questionnaire, the correlations between different parts are computed so as to seek patterns and relationships between the results of different parts. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) is used to calculate the correlation coefficients.

### *Question 6-10 & 11-15*

Firstly, the correlation between Question 6-10 and Question 11-15 is calculated. This is to look into whether respondents' self-perception for the effectiveness of the URA's participatory measures and the results got from referring to literature are consistent.

### *Part 1 & Part 2*

Secondly, the correlation between Part 1 and Part 2 is calculated. Part 1 investigates the effectiveness of the participatory measures perceived by respondents while Part 2 is about respondents' attitude and intention to participate in the planning process. The more positively correlated the two are, the lower than intention respondents have and

the more satisfied they are with the effectiveness of the measures.

*Part 1 & Part 3*

As mentioned, Part 1 investigates the effectiveness of the participatory measures perceived by respondents. Part 3 is to have a glimpse of how to improve the future participatory measures in a better way. A more positively correlated relationship found between the two parts would mean that the respondents' hold a positive and looking-forward attitude towards the future improvement of public participation while they have a positive perception on the effectiveness of the measures.

*Part 2 & Part 3*

Part 2 looks into the intention to participate while Part 3 is to see respondents' attitude towards future improvement of public participation. Correlation between the two parts is to be found with the aim to establish relationship between the present intention of respondents and their attitude towards the future development of participatory measures.

## 10.3 The Analysis – Visual Aids & WAI

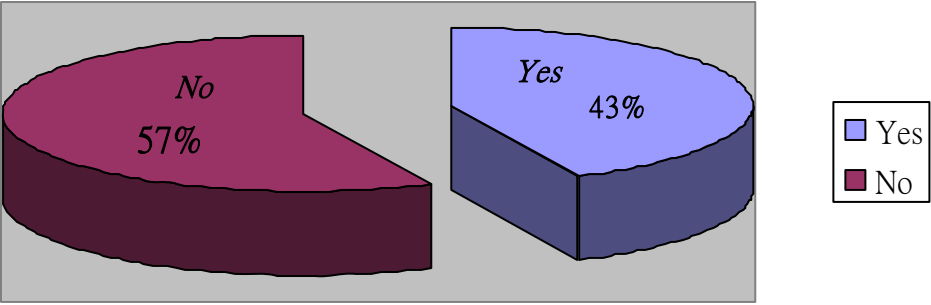
### 10.3.1 Part One

#### Question 1-5 Awareness of the public towards the 5 measures

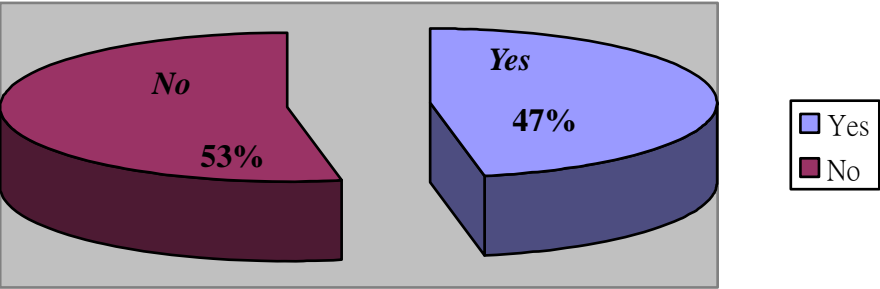
Part One of the questionnaire investigates if the respondents have heard of the five participatory measures. This part echoes Learning Objective 2, to see if the approaches are effective. Knowing whether the citizens know about the approaches is the very first step. This sets as a preliminary snap shot of the upcoming questions which in a deeper manner explore the participatory willingness of them.

The five questions are now presented with pie-charts about the findings. They ask about if respondents have heard of the five public participatory measures.

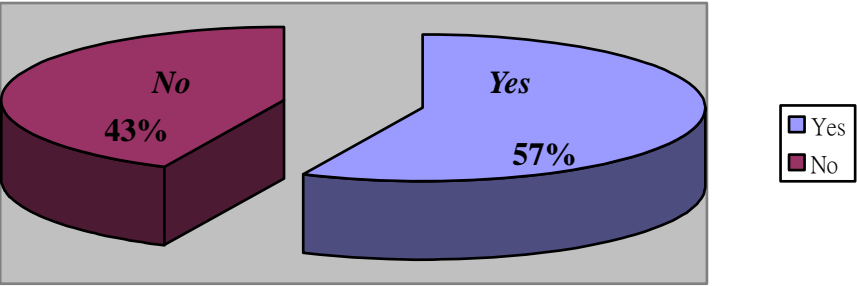
#### Question 1 Have you heard of District Advisory Group?



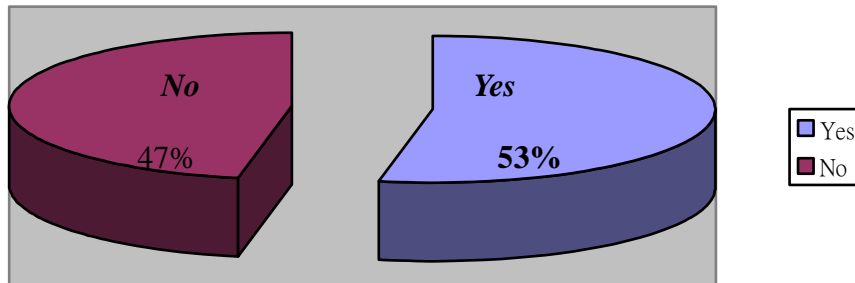
Question 2    Have you heard of Community Design Workshop?



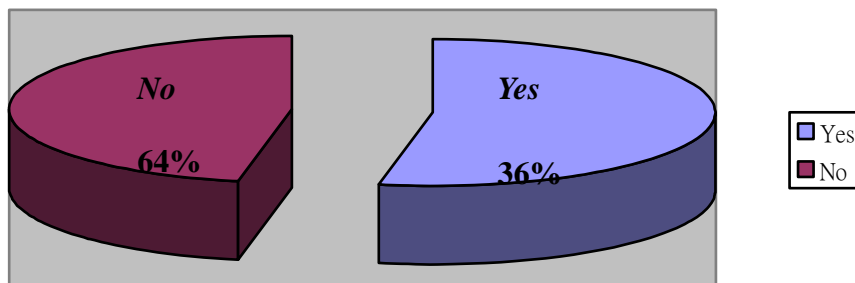
Question 3    Have you heard of Neighborhood Community Centre?



Question 4 Have you heard of Consultation Meetings?



Question 5 Have you heard of Community Aspiration Survey?



Regarding all the five participatory measures, the proportion of respondents answering Yes and No to the enquiry of whether they have heard of the measures is quite equally distributed. No particular measures have a rate higher than 70%, meaning that no measure is known to more than 70% of the respondents.



Except the Neighborhood Community Centre and the Consultation Meetings, all the other measures including District Advisory Group, Community Design Workshop and Community Aspiration Survey have the rate lower than 50%. Less than 50% of the respondents have heard about the three measures.

Overall, as shown in the pie-charts, the distribution between Yes and No is quite even. This finding shows that the respondents are not fully aware to the URA policies in the district. This may be the cause of only a small bunch of people involving in the participatory activities but not the other less active part of the community.

**Question 6-10**      How the respondents find the five measures in the aspect of effectiveness in conveying their viewpoints to the URA.

The respondents were asked to rate each measure in terms of their effectiveness levels on a five-point scale, ranging from 'no effect' to 'very effective' (see Appendix 1). The weighted average index (WAI) is calculated to express the effectiveness conceived by respondents.

WAI	Question	
34	6	District Advisory Group
29	7	Community Design Workshop
26	8	Neighborhood Community Centre
38	9	Consultation Meetings
34	10	Community Aspiration Survey

It can be seen that the results lay mainly in the WAI categories of 25-40, under 50.

The rate of effectiveness conceived by respondents is low for all the five measures.

### Question 11-15

These 5 questions of Part One also investigate whether the respondents think the measures are effective or not. This part echoes the previous five questions. Unlike the previous questions which ask the respondents directly about the effectiveness, these five questions use an indirect approach, having questions set with elements extracted from Literature.

The respondents were asked to rate each measure in terms of their effectiveness levels on a five-point scale. The continuum ranges from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’ (see Appendix 1). The statements set are all positive ones relating to effectiveness of participatory measures. The more the extent that respondents agree with the statements (the higher marks given), the more effective the measures are.

These five questions making reference to literature are set as kind of supplement to the previous five questions, asking the respondents directly to rank the level of effectiveness they regard for the five participatory measures. The result would not be accurate enough if just solely depends on the direct asking. Thus, the five questions making reference to literature are set. They are extracted from literature after considering the ease of understanding for the public. Since this is a questionnaire for the general public, no difficult and specific terms should be used. Therefore, only part of the literature is extracted for setting the questions.

Findings of Question 11-15:

WAI	Question
49	11

34	12
47	8
35	9
39	10

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All the five questions have WAI of lower than 50. The range is 34-50. The result echoes that of Question 5-10, in which respondents are asked in a direct way to rate the level of effectiveness of the measures. Same as the results got from Question 5-10, WAI are all below 50, representing a low degree of agreement that the measures fulfill requirements of good participatory measure with reference to literature.

### 10.3.2 Part Two – Question 16-20

Part Two is for investigating the Learning Objective One, which is to find out if the respondents have the intention to participate in the planning stage of renewal. Questions in this part are set mainly by making reference to information got from interviews with URA official and Kwun Tong District Councilor. Respondents are asked to choose whether they strongly agree, agree, being neutral, disagree or strongly disagree about statements depicting their potential thoughts.

The respondents were asked to rate each measure in terms of their effectiveness levels on a five-point scale. The continuum ranges from ‘strongly disagree’ to ‘strongly agree’ (see Appendix 1). Questions are set with statements depicting the scenario assumed, which is also our hypothesis that citizens lack the intention to participate in the planning process of urban renewal. This is set based on the results got from interviews with the Kwun Tong District Councilor and URA official.

Findings of Question 16-20:

WAI	Question
44	16
61	17
42	18
57	19
61	20

Among the five questions (statements), three have WAI higher than 50. For the two which do not have WAI higher than 50, the scores are still near 50.

We cannot conclude that the hypothesis that citizens do not have intention to join in the planning stage of renewal project is right. Yet, because more than 50% of the statements have WAI of more than 50, the hypothesis can be described as correct to a certain extent. Further elaboration is in Chapter 11.

### 10.3.3 Part Three – Question 21-25

This part is set to have a glimpse of how to improve the future participatory measures in a better way. Questions are set with reference to literature regarding the benefits of public participation. If respondents give high rates to show their agreement to the statements, it means that they welcome the benefits brought about by participatory measures. On the contrary, it would mean that they are already satisfied with the current situation. This should be made clearer before setting the next step to promote public participation.

Findings:

WAI	Question
67	21
66	22
48	23
58	24
69	25

Except Question 23, all the other questions have WAI of more than 50. This reflects that respondents agree to the stated benefits of public participation. The WAI got from this part is the highest among all other parts.

#### 10.4 The Analysis – Correlation Coefficient

Question 6-10 & 11-15 of Part 1

The result generated by SPSS is as follows:

			Question 6-10	Question 11-15
Spearman's rho	Question 6-10	Correlation	1.000	-.200
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)		
		N		
	Question 11-15	Correlation	-.200	1.000
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)		
		N		

The correlation is found not significant at the level of 0.747. The correlation coefficient of -0.2 receives little support. Thus, there has not relationship between the findings from Question 6-10 and Question 11-15 since the correlation is rejected by the low significant level.

## Part 1 & Part 2

The result generated by SPSS is as follows:

			Part _1	PART_2
Spearman's rho	PART_1	Correlation	1.000	-.718
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)		
		N		
	PART_2	Correlation	-.718	1.000
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)		
		N		



In this part, Part 1 and Part 2 are correlated. Regarding Part 1, Question 11-15 are used for analysis because the reliability of these 5 questions outshines that of Question 6-10, in which respondents gave their rates simply based on their self perception instead of questions having reference to literature and theories.

The significant level for the correlation is 0.172, meaning that the correlation receives support. The correlation coefficient between Part 1 and Part 2 is negative at -0.718.

### Part 1 & Part 3

The result generated by SPSS is as follows:

			PART_1	PART_3
Spearman's rho	PART_1	Correlation	1.000	.100
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.873
		N	5	5
	PART_3	Correlation	.100	1.000
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.873	.
		N	5	5

Part 1 is correlated with Part 3. Regarding Part 1, Question 11-15 are again used for analysis because the reliability of these 5 questions outshines that of Question 6-10, in which respondents gave their rates simply based on their self perception instead of

questions having reference to literature and theories.

The level of significance is 0.873, meaning that the correlation calculated is with low reliability and rejected. Thus, no relation can be established between the two parts.

### Part 2 & Part 3

The result generated by SPSS is as follows:

			PART_2	PART_3
Spearman's rho	PART_2	Correlation	1.000	.616
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)		
		N		
	PART_3	Correlation	.616	1.000
		Coefficient		
		Sig. (2-tailed)		
		N		

The correlation between Part 2 and Part 3 is computed, with the significant level at 0.269. Thus, the correlation can be used as an indicator on the relationship between the two parts. A positive correlation at 0.616 is found.

Details of the interpretation from the findings are found in Chapter 11.

## **Chapter 11**

### **Discussion**

#### **11.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, the analysis from questionnaires, together with invaluable information from interviews, are to be discussed in light of the two main objectives of this dissertation. Competing Values Model, mentioned in Chapter 2, is the fundamental of our discussion. Having discussed about the evolvement of the system and the strengthening of the Social System in the Model in Chapter 2, we put the focus mainly on the features and evolvement of the Social System, which is composed of the general public and non-government organizations. This focus is found because the main amendment to the Competing Values Model following the elapse of time rests on the Social System. Details would be found in Discussion 1, Discussion 2 and Discussion 3, which talk about the Social and Institutional System. These 2 systems are the centre of attention for this research.

The discussion is to be divided into four parts. The *first part* is to provide a general picture of how the present public participation in Hong Kong is really like. We can

have a general idea of how the Competing Values Model, mentioned in Chapter 4, explains the present situation. Then it comes to the *second part*, in which Objective One, that is to find out whether the residents directly affected by Kwun Tong Town Centre Project have the intention to participate in the planning stage of renewal process, would be discussed. The Social System of the Competing Values Model is to be explored.

The *third part* is to discuss about Objective Two, to investigate if the current approaches by URA are effective means to enhance public participation. This relates to the Institutional System in the Competing Values Model, which is URA. The *forth part* is about the relationship between the 3 parts of the questionnaire. It is mainly about the psychological aspect of respondents. The last part is the recommendation for fulfilling a better participatory situation, as an afterthought with the results gained from all the above sources of information and discussions.

## 11.2 Discussion 1 – A Picture of the Present Pubic Participation in Hong Kong

Finding out the category of the current participation situation in the urban renewal

process is a prerequisite for devising new methods to improve the situation. We analyze how our Case Study is, with theoretical framework, so as to have a glimpse of how Hong Kong's situation is.

#### The Residents (Social System in the Competing Values Model)

The Orbits analogy, originated by Aggens (1983), is a very good introductory to look into the present public participation situation in Hong Kong. The public, according to Aggens (1983), comprises six orbits. They are termed 'unsurprised apathetics', 'observers', 'commenters', 'technical reviewers', 'active participants' and 'co-decision makers'.

The Kwun Tong residents, and also the overall Hong Kong citizens, tend to belong to the category of 'observers'. They do not voice out the opinion unless they are really concerned with what is going on. Usually, newspaper articles and information documents are their means to get informed. They may make comments to other public interest groups and special interest organizations. The possible participation mechanisms for this bunch of people are websites and newsletters, which are all passive means.

The famous Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation also provides a framework of different levels of public participation. Different gradations are used to illustrate the status of public participation. In our Case Study, the situation belongs to "Degree of Tokenism". The residents are allowed to have a voice. Still, they lack the power to insure that their views will be heeded by URA. The powerholders still continue to hold the rights to decide. Public participation initiated by government always includes public relation and manipulation, according to Darke (2000). This does applies to the situation in Hong Kong.

In addition, Yap (1993) criticizes Arnstein's Ladder by introducing two criteria, which are the locus of power and the relationship between the parties. It is obvious that our Case Study falls into the category of "Co-operation", meaning no power sharing yet, But, consultation is present while the authority makes decision.

This conclusion is drawn from a variety of sources.

Firstly, it is the interview with URA official, Mr Wan. According to Mr Wan, residents are found to be quite dependent upon local groups. *"There was not much direct participation by them in the walking tours. Rather, they were mostly represented by*

*groups. One-sided views became unavoidable and bias information may be channeled through the groups back to the residents.” “Participating residents are mainly from some concern groups within the district, having a tendency of relying on the groups instead of participating on their own.”*

Secondly, from the interview with Kwun Tong District Councilor, Mr Chan, the same view was got. *“It is recognized that **residents in general do not have much intention to get involved in the planning and consultation stage.** Efforts have to be paid to raise their interest to care about the renewal project because of their passiveness.”*

Residents, one of the parties in the Social System in the Competing Values Model, do not play an active role in the whole participatory framework. Yet it was mentioned that the force of Social System is increasing at the same time. We can conclude that the strengthening force has its source not from residents, but from the non-government organizations (NGO) and community organizations. They are on the rise to strengthen the power of the Social System. Community organizations include district offices, voluntary organizations helping the needy and even environmental groups concerning the district environment. In the case of public participation and in this case study, the Kwun Tong District Council is playing a dominant role in

strengthening the Social System. Together with the Kwun Tong Residents' Group, which is a non-profit making organization with close connection with Kwun Tong District Council, they strengthen the Social System by always representing the residents.

### Related Literature

According to Litwin (1976), we have to give attention both to member readiness for undertaking cooperative action and to their know-how to implement such an action. Clearly, according to Mr Chan, residents in Kwun Tong lack readiness and knowledge at the same time. Most of them are not highly educated, or just with a low level of education. Thus, according to Litwin's four-cell table, the Kwun Tong residents belong to Situation D.

Figure 21 Relations between Knowledge and Readiness

Know-how	Readiness	
	Present	Absent
Present	A	B
Absent	C	D



*Source: Levi, Y. and Litwin, H. (ed.) Community and Cooperatives in Participatory Development*

The URA is working together with union in the district, especially the Kwun Tong Resident Union, attempting to transform the situation into C, with a higher level of readiness. With Situation D, it would be quite a harsh task for the URA to implement participatory measures. By trying hard to transform the situation to C, things can be amenable to well-planned repair. In the previous years starting from 2000, a lot has been done for this transformation, by brochures published and numerous consultation talks. After the transformation to Situation C, it is more easily to be remedied. Training can be provided to enhance residents' know-how.

It is clear that URA is also trying to strengthen the force of Social System, especially the residents. After all, public participation is similar to a more balancing of forces between the Institutional System and the Social System. Yet in the era of LDC, the Social System was always outweighed by the Institutional System, which was LDC. Now, with URA, Social System is on the rise, thanks to the rise of district organizations. URA is also launching means to enhance public participation so as to strengthen the Social System, which is a good sign for the imbalance situation which

was always found in the past.

#### URA's Approach (Institutional System)

At the outset of a participatory programme, it is essential to define and understand the community. There are two main ways to identify the public according to McAuthur (1993), which are termed 'top-down approach' and 'bottom-up approach'.

The bottom-up approach is used by URA. This approach is applicable for policies involving possible emergence of latent publics. URA defines the public mainly by letting the public define itself. It observes what groups and interests emerge.

According to Mr Wan from URA, *"There was no prior announcement to the Kwun Tong residents of what our upcoming participatory measures would be. Our approach, as mentioned, is rather proactive and flexible. Proper measures appropriate for the time being would be incorporated. We plan to have flexible means, considering different parties emerging and the response from the public."*

### 11.3 Discussion Two – Intention to Participate

#### *Issue*

Part Two of the Questionnaire explores into this area, to see whether the residents have the intention to participate in the pre-renewal planning process. The discussion has the focus on Social System again, which is the crux of our research. The hypothesis behind the setting of the questions is that respondents do not have much intention to participate in the planning process in pre-renewal stage. The higher WAI got, the more applicable is the hypothesis to the real situation and vice versa.

#### *Findings from Questionnaire (Question 16-20):*

WAI	Question
44	16
61	17
42	18
57	19
61	20

Among the five questions (statements), three have WAI higher than 50. For the two which do not have WAI higher than 50, the scores are still near 50. 50 is used as a watershed for determining whether the result is positive or negative.

We cannot conclude that the hypothesis that citizens do not have intention to join in the planning stage of renewal project is completely right. Not all the questions have WAI of more than 50. The hypothesis cannot be described as correct and totally applicable to the reality. From the results, it is seen that respondents do not have a strong tendency on either side. The scores obtained are generally near 50, the watershed set in this study.

**Thus, the respondents do not clearly show low intention to participate in the planning process in pre-renewal stage. This explains the comparatively small force from residents in the Social System while the increasing force from Social System mostly comes from district organizations.**

*Findings from Interviews:*

The information got from all the two interviewees, including the Kwun Tong District

Councilor, Mr Chan and the URA official, Mr Wan shows that residents DO NOT have the intention to participate in the planning process.

According to Mr Chan, *“It is recognized that residents in general do not have much intention to get involved in the planning and consultation stage. Efforts have to be paid to raise their interest to care about the renewal project because of their passiveness. In 2002, questionnaires were distributed to the public and consultation held to make them aware of their rights, how they can be benefited. Also, they were told their role in the whole renewal project, which is a say in the planning and consultation process. Yet, overall, they need further education and guidance on the participatory role designated to them.”*

The residents simply lack the readiness and intention to participate, according to Mr Chan. By asking him to describe whether the Kwun Tong residents are eager to be part of the planning process, he answered promptly without second thoughts. His experience of representing the district and strong foothold in Kwun Tong increase the validity of his statement

According to Mr Wan, *“It is common for the busy residents to prefer representation by local groups instead of playing a role directly in the consultation activities*

*organized by URA. In order to avoid the possibility of confused or misinterpreted, information communicated by local groups to the affected. URA produces the newsletter to transmit accurate news of the renewal project to the residents.”*

*“Walking tours are organized to enhance the public’s understanding and the inclusion of their viewpoints in the design, walking tours, together with seminars, have been organized. The general public was invited to join the URA officials to get around the renewal area, with the chance to express their opinions. Yet, residents are found to be quite dependent upon local groups. **There was not much direct participation by them in the walking tours. Rather, they were mostly represented by groups.** One-sided views became unavoidable and biased information may be channeled through the groups back to the residents.”*

*“Like most of the other normal residents, the Kwun Tong affected ones mainly are concerned about compensation and time of acquisition matters. The major, and perhaps the only, vital factors affecting them seems to be financial matters. **Participating residents are mainly from some concern groups within the district, having a tendency of relying on the groups instead of participating on their own.**”*

Concluded from the interviews, residents have low tendency to take part in the planning process of pre-renewal stage. Even if they would like to join, they have the tendency to depend on representative groups. They have low desire to participate in person in activities organized by URA.

*Related Literature:*

There is clearly contradiction between the findings from questionnaires and that from interviews. This phenomenon can be explained by literature.

Do citizens really mean what they say? Kelly (1963) holds a viewpoint saying that it is not the case. It is rare and impossible for one to express the whole of his construction system. This fact makes it difficult for others to know precisely how he feels. People express incompletely. People do not express all they are thinking. Their act may not be consistent with what they really have in their minds. It can be approximated that even residents do have the intention to participate in their mindset, they would not act according to this desire.

Botes and Rensburg (2000) suggest the idea of 'the lack of public interest in

becoming involved'. Kok and Gellderblom (1994) describe that people are ignorant and need to be steered in the right direction by those who know better, implying the professionals. This idea seems a bit contradictive with the calling for community participation. It is implied that the public tends to lack the interest to play an active role in the planning process in pre-renewal stage.

Nagel (1987) raises that rational people tend not to participate and remain as free-riders. Rational egoistic people may sometimes participate. Such situational participation depends on the individual's own efficacy and his own perception of the potential benefits to be gained by him and others as contrasts with the cost of participation. If motivation is related to an altruistic perception, an individual will then participate regardless of what others do and perceive.

Are Hong Kong citizens altruistic in nature? No. Rather, they are more egoistic, which is the rational nature according to Nagel (1987). They tend not to participate. Yet, at the same time, they would like to be free-riders and also enjoy the benefits brought about by participation. This explains their dependency towards representative groups. There are a limited number of people with altruistic perception and are willing to actively participate. They form the active representative groups of the wider



community.

This egoistic nature of the residents in the Social System further explains the phenomenon that residents have not played a major role in the strengthening of Social System throughout the recent decades. The force mainly comes from district organizations, NGO and environmental groups.

#### 11.4 Discussion 3 – Effective Participatory Means?

*Issue:*

This part is to investigate if the current approaches by URA are effective means to enhance public participation. We investigate into the present participatory situation, from the Institutional System's angle.

Findings from Questionnaire (Question 6-10):

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WAI	Question
34	6 District Advisory Group

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29	7	Community Design Workshop
26	8	Neighborhood Community Centre
38	9	Consultation Meetings
34	10	Community Aspiration Survey

---

By respondents' direct rating of the five participatory measures, all the WAIs got are lower than 50, representing an unsatisfactory level of effectiveness in the eyes of respondents, who are the major users of the measures.

Findings from Questionnaire (Question 11-15):

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WAI	Question
49	11
34	12
47	13
35	14
39	15

---

All the five questions have WAI of lower than 50. The range is 34-50. The result echoes that of Question 5-10, in which respondents are asked in a direct way to rate

the level of effectiveness of the measures. While in this part, the questions are set based on the criteria for effective participatory measures from literature. Same as the results got from Question 5-10, WAI are all below 50, representing a low degree of agreement that the measures fulfill requirements of good participatory measure with reference to literature.

**The respondents do not regard the measures incorporated by URA as effective for them to participate in the planning process. It implies that the Social System does not think the Institutional System has done enough to achieve a more balanced situation between the two contrasting force.**

*Findings from Interview:*

According to Mr Lau, Contract Manager of Hong Kong Housing Society, “A *very small extent of public participation is involved. There are several reasons. Firstly, citizens have different perspectives and high expectations while resource in the society is limited. The financial commitment to fulfill citizens’ wishes is so large that the society may not be able to afford.*”

*“In fact, **public consultation does exist, but only to a small extent**, including meetings to explain the details of the renewal projects to the owners and tenants. But, in general, no views are gathered for the planning process because of the viability of views from citizens.”*

From Mr Lau’s viewpoints, public participation needs much resource because of the large number of perspectives from different residents. Once launching means for them to raise their viewpoints, a high amount of cost has to be incurred to fulfill their wishes. Thus, only limited consultation is present. This partly explains the low effectiveness of participatory measures conceived by the respondents. Even the officials may not hold an optimistic view for public participation. Under this circumstance, the measures would hardly be designed to genuinely incorporate the public in the planning process of renewal projects. In addition, it is difficult to satisfy residents because their demand is unlimited.

According to Mr Wan from URA, *“There are politicians who may have some hidden agenda, playing an active role in renewal projects. Some politicians including Legislative Councilors and District Councilors are playing an active role in Kwun Tong Town Centre Project, making use of the public participatory elements in the*

*renewal project. Public participation in Hong Kong attracts political elements to intricate in between. In some cases this may even lead to a compromise for the real economic benefits of renewal projects.”*

From the questionnaire, respondents show signs of disapproval for the effectiveness of URA's measures. Mr Wan raises another potential reason for this. There were numerous examples taking place in the past that politicians stir up discontent among the community for their own political benefits. It is hoped that the public would unite together supporting the politicians after the deliberate stirring up of discontent towards the government authorities. The results from questionnaire may be partly attributable to this cause.

*Related Literature:*

Good public participation measures offer a greater say for the individual citizen in the decision-making process. But, there exists 'unreal' participation. Jette (1990) describes 'unreal' participation as a form of tactical participation in which participatory action and activities are mere 'perceptions' manipulated by the manager. The authorities try to employ strategies to manipulate participatory efforts so as to gain support and induce citizens to agree to decisions already taken.

Whether the ineffectiveness of the measures conceived by the respondents are attributable to the 'unreal' nature (Jette, 1990), or political reasons raised by Mr Wan and the unlimited demand from residents raised by Mr Lau, remains a crucial point to be solved. Personally, I believe that there is a mixture of both elements. There is one point for sure. The Social System does not think the Institutional System has done enough to achieve a more balanced force between the two. Although the former is strengthening itself and have a stronger force now comparing with the past, the latter (Institutional System) is still having a stronger position than the former one.

## 11.5 Discussion 4 – Relationship between Findings about Perceptions, & Effectiveness of the Measures

### *Issue*

This part is to discuss the relationship between the 3 parts of the questionnaire. It is mainly about the psychological aspect of respondents. The effectiveness of the participatory measures, respondents' intention and perception about participation has been explored. Correlation is calculated for finding out the relationship. The analysis of the correlations is found in Chapter 10 while the detail interpretation is done here in this chapter.

### **Question 6-10 & 11-15 of Part 1**

The correlation is found not significant at the level of 0.747. The correlation coefficient of -0.2 receives little support. Thus, there has not relationship between the findings from Question 6-10 and Question 11-15 since the correlation is rejected by the low significant level.

We can say that the effectiveness of the participatory measures conceived by the respondents does not have relationship with the effectiveness perceived by them *with reference to literature*.

*Related literature:*

Do citizens really mean what they say? Kelly (1963) holds a viewpoint saying that it is not the case. It is rare and impossible for one to express the whole of his construction system. This fact makes it difficult for others to know precisely how he feels. People express incompletely. People do not express all they are thinking. Their act may not be consistent with what they really have in their minds.

In this way, it is approximated that even the respondents have an outcry that the participatory measures are not effective at all, it may not be the case. Question 11-15 are designed with reference to literature and theories, thus with a higher reliability. The WAI got from Question 11-15 are all higher than that of Question 6-10. Although all the WAI are still under 50, representing a low level of effectiveness of the measures conceived by respondents, the phenomenon proves that what Kelly (1963) constructs is applicable to the present society.



### **Part 1 & Part 2**

The significant level for the correlation is 0.172, meaning that the correlation receives support. The correlation coefficient between Part 1 and Part 2 is negative at -0.718.

It is a negatively strong correlation. Since the questions set in Part 2 are with the hypothesis that respondents have low intention, so, the higher the scores found, the lower intention they have. While in Part 1, the questions are set in such a way that higher scores mean the more effectiveness perceived by respondents. We can arrive at the interpretation that the low effectiveness conceived by respondents does not mean that the respondents have a high intention to participate. A negative correlation indicates that the values on the two parts being analyzed move in opposite directions. We can conclude that there is a relationship that the more ineffective respondents conceive about the participatory measures, the lower intention they have to participate.

### **Part 1 & Part 3**

The level of significance is 0.873, meaning that the correlation calculated is with low

reliability and rejected. Thus, no relation can be established between the two parts.

Between the effectiveness of participatory measures and the respondents' attitude for future improvement of participatory measures, there is no correlation observed. It is concluded that the present effectiveness does not affect their views on future participatory means.

### **Part 2 & Part 3**

The correlation between Part 2 and Part 3 is computed, with the significant level at 0.269. Thus, the correlation can be used as an indicator on the relationship between the two parts. A positive correlation at 0.616 is found.

It is a strongly positive correlation, implying that Part 2 and Part 3 have scores moving in the same direction. In Part 2, higher scores mean the lower intention the respondents have for participating in the planning process. In Part 3, if respondents give high rates to show their agreement to the statements, it means that they welcome the benefits brought about by participatory measures. This is a good sign for the future improvement to the participatory mechanism.

The WAI got from Part 2 indicates that the respondents do have low intention to participate, while the WAI from Part 3 reflects that they welcome the benefits brought about by enhancement of public participation. The findings imply a strange phenomenon. Respondents have a contradicting mindset. They, on one hand, have little intention to participate. Yet, on the other hand, they welcome the benefits from public participation. This finding echoes the views got from a respondent. Among all the respondents the researcher interview in person, there was one who was very friendly and was willing to share with the researcher further about her viewpoints. She admitted that most citizens have low desire and intention to participate because they do not want to spend time on it. Still, they demand from URA and want their voices to be heard. This is contradictory.

*Related Literature:*

Botes and Rensburg (2000) suggest the idea of ‘the lack of public interest in becoming involved’. Kok and Gelderblom (1994) describe that people are ignorant and need to be steered in the right direction by those who know better, implying the professionals. It is implied that the public tends to lack the interest to play an active role in the planning process in pre-renewal stage.

Nagel (1987) raises that rational people tend not to participate and remain as free-riders. Rational egoistic people may sometimes participate. Such situational participation depends on the individual's own efficacy and his own perception of the potential benefits to be gained by him and others as contrasts with the cost of participation. If motivation is related to an altruistic perception, an individual will then participate regardless of what others do and perceive.

Yet, most people are found to be free-riders and egoistic. They want to enjoy the benefits. But at the same time, they are not willing to sacrifice. This phenomenon is also consistent with what Mr Wan from URA described.

Findings from Interview:

According to Mr Wan, ***“residents are found to be quite dependent upon local groups.***

*There was not much direct participation by them in the walking tours. Rather, they were mostly represented by groups. One-sided views became unavoidable and bias information may be channeled through the groups back to the residents.”*

Obviously, from what Mr Wan mentioned, citizens generally have a tendency not to

participate but only to get benefits. It is also a sign of reluctance to give and to participate.

From the correlation analysis:

1. **The effectiveness of the participatory measures conceived by the respondents does not have relationship with the effectiveness perceived by them *with reference to literature*.**
2. **The more ineffective respondents conceive about the participatory measures, the lower intention they have to participate.**
3. **The present effectiveness of the measures does not affect participants' views on future participatory means.**
4. **Respondents on one hand, have little intention to participate. Yet, on the other hand, they welcome the benefits from public participation.**

## 11.6 Discussion 5 - Recommendation

In this part, recommendation is made for better participatory measures.

*Findings from Questionnaire (Question 21-25) :*

WAI	Question
67	21
66	22
48	23
58	24
69	25

These 5 questions have the aim to have a glimpse of how to improve the future participatory measures in a better way.

Except Question 23, all the other questions have WAI of more than 50. This reflects that respondents agree to the stated benefits of public participation. The WAI got from this part is the highest among all other parts.

From the high WAI, the previous assumption that residents are not interested to be part of the policy generating process in pre-renewal stage cannot be taken as correct. Provided that we get low WAI from this part, further recommendation may not be effective because the residents would be satisfied with the limited chance given to participate. They would not agree with the potential benefits brought about by public participation because they simply do not feel the need. Yet, the reality is that the WAI got is high and therefore recommendations are made as follows.

#### Results from the Above Discussions

- 1. The respondents do not clearly show low intention to participate in the planning process in pre-renewal stage. Yet, on the other hand, they welcome the benefits from public participation.**
- 2. The respondents do not regard the measures incorporated by URA as effective for them to participate in the planning process.**
- 3. The respondents have low know-how and readiness to participate.**

**The above results are answering and with reference to research objectives set in Chapter 2.**

## 11.7 Remedy to the Area Deserving Attention

### 11.7.1 Empowerment (for Result 1 & 2)

According to Mr Chan, residents in Kwun Tong lack readiness and knowledge at the same time. Most of them are not highly educated, or just with a low level of education. Thus, according to Litwin's four-cell table, the Kwun Tong residents belong to Situation D, meaning the residents lack both know-how and readiness.

Figure 22 Relations between Knowledge and Readiness

Know-how	Readiness	
	Present	Absent
Present	A	B
Absent	C	D

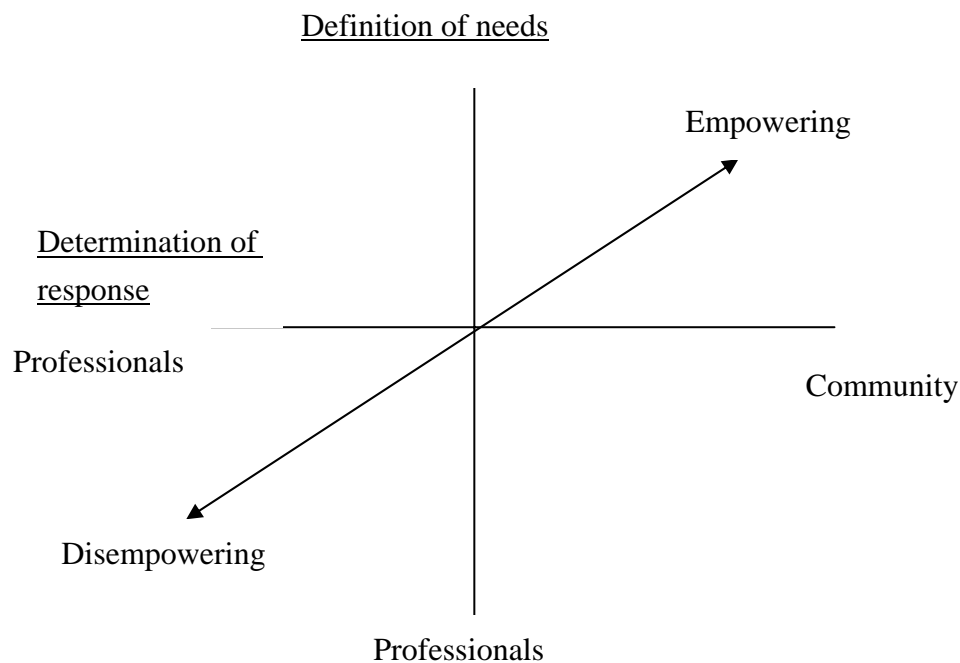
*Source: Levi, Y. and Litwin, H. (ed.) Community and Cooperatives in Participatory Development*

Empowerment, according to Conger (1989) as the act of strengthening an individual's beliefs in his or her sense of effectiveness, is a fundamental step in enhancement of



participatory measures. As in Situation A, with the presence of both readiness and know-how, matters can be accomplished efficiently. In Situation D, the reverse is true. Situation B and C are amenable to well-planned repair. Regarding Situation B, people are technically competent but not ready to cooperate. An unhurried process of community development is called for. Participation mechanisms like committees or recreation clubs are to be encouraged. Once they people feel ready, cooperative actions will be undertaken. Situation C is much more easily to be remedied. When know-how is lacking, training can be provided. Finding out which category the affected public belongs to is a prerequisite.

Figure 23 Simple Model of Empowerment



*Source: Barr, A. (1995) Empowering communities-beyond fashionable rhetoric? Some reflections on Scottish experience, Community Development Journal*

We should work rightward along the arrow to arrive at the situation that the community has the determination of response and needs.

Empowerment is a crucial element in the whole participatory process. It offers the public the confidence and the ability to participate in decision-making process. Yet, beforehand, we have to investigate whether the public suffers from the psychological

damage of perpetual loss of hope and self-esteem. According to Marris (1986), this is extremely important. Mourning for what appears unattainable, yet is constantly projected by the media as normal, certainly disappoints the public. URA must recognize the necessity of personal empowerment as empowerment's basis. In addition, it has to be aware that empowerment processes will potentially change the composition of communities. It creates a constant need to re-empower in a cyclical process.

However, ultimately, URA can never empower the public because empowerment can only be achieved by the public themselves. URA can only create the conditions for them, according to Barr (1995). Similarly, empowerment has to focus on a relatively small number of people taking the leadership role, rather than all the citizens.

### **11.7.2 Visioning (for Result 2)**

It is introduced by Sanoff (2000), which is a process to create living, useful guides for public actions intended to position, for the community for the future. In fact, this is incorporated into the questionnaire in Question 11. Respondents were asked if they find this element in the present renewal project in Kwun Tong. A WAI of 49 is found, slightly under 50. This is a vital element for a successful participatory situation.

A large group of people, normally stakeholders, can be gathered in order to kick off the process, with informal brainstorming about what should be included in the community vision. Then, breaking into smaller groups comprising about seven, participants should discuss the ideas and present to the large group. In this way, common views become the direction of the vision and participants are responsible for the framework within which decisions are made.

At present, there is simply no such process to identify the vision. Even if there has, it was just under the leadership and dominance of URA officials. It should be noted that the major participants should be stakeholders. They should be the one to kick off the process.

### 11.7.3 Features to be Replenished (for Result 2)

Sited from Syme (1992), a number of features have been identified in conducting adequate public involvement programmes. The features which are lacking in the present Hong Kong situation are restated here. The replenishment of these features can help remedy the present ineffectiveness of the measures.

- i) The process of public participation should be agreed between the URA and participants.
- j) The objectives of the public participation need to be clearly stated
- k) People need to be aware of the level of power being offered.
- l) Efforts should be made by the URA to identify all interested parties.
- m) **Participants should know how their submissions will be processed.**

Point E, the bolded one, is incorporated into Question 14 of the questionnaire. The WAI is only 35, implying that participants do not know clearly about how their opinion would be processed. From the interview with Mr Wan from URA, it is known that the process of participatory schemes and details is not make known to the public beforehand. Residents are neither aware of the level of power offered to them. The

above points should be improved.

### Armstrong's Elements

Armstrong (1993) suggests eight elements to successful community involvement in development. They are all drawn on United Kingdom experience of community involvement in major physical development schemes. They are good practical references for Hong Kong to make to in order to improve the current unsatisfactory level of public participation in the urban renewal process. The following are extracted for their practicability and applicability to Hong Kong, which are also lacking at this moment.

### Community Education

This is an integrated part of community development. It develops the community's critical awareness of the issues and the ability to answer questions. The development of both reflection and action are emphasized, so that action is well-informed by analysis and vice versa, creating a virtuous circle. A growing design literacy among community participants is to be created, so that they gain the confidence and skills to appraise design proposals and express their own preferences. This is a long-term

process of which the effect can only be seen after a period of time.

### Technical Aid

Technical aid should be available at the right time in and appropriate form, which does not take away the direction and control from the community. It is a vital element of the multi-professional team.

### Capacity Building

It is the deliberate building up of community strength and capacity to undertake increasingly demanding tasks. It can be regarded as the link between the process of community development and the development of specific community skills. This echoes 'empowerment', which is mentioned in the former part of this chapter.

### Community Management, Community Benefit & Community Ownership

The three in a collective way means that community must have a full sense of ownership of the initiative and there is an appropriate system for community management for the initiative and the resources.

### Partnership

Most community development cases involve the establishment of partnerships between different organizations and different sectors such as the private, public, voluntary and community sectors. The partnership approach brings a much wider range of resources and skills to bear on an issue. Attention has to be paid to the equal relationship within the partnership. The community has to be aware that they have an equal stake rather than junior to the partnership.



### The Overall Direction (for Result 1, 2 & 3)

Figure 24 The Amended Johari Window based on the case of Public Participation

	Known to Public	Unknown to Public
Known to the authority	<b>Free and Open:</b> Both parties know	<b>Blind:</b> The authority knows but not the public
Unknown to the authority	<b>Hidden:</b> The public knows but not the authority	<b>Unknown:</b> Both parties do not know

*Source: Adopted from Munro, E. A. , Manthei, R. J. & Small, J. J. (1979), Counseling: A Skills Approach,*

Our target is to avoid the bottom right hand square but to achieve the top left hand one by using appropriate communication techniques and participation means. The vertical dividers should be shifted to the right while the horizontal one shifted to the bottom. In this way, the ladder of Arnstein's can be climbed up towards upper rungs. This overall direction can only be achieved with all the above remedies suggested to URA.

## **Chapter 12**

### **Conclusion**

#### **12.1 Concluding Remarks**

Public participation in urban renewal in Hong Kong is getting much more attention in these years. Urban renewal can be viewed in the framework of competing system. The Competing Key System is used to illustrate the parties involved, which are the Legal System (URA Ordinance), Economic System (Developers' economic goals), Institutional System (URA) and Social System (Stakeholders, General public, Community organizations, Environmental groups). Our attention is on the Social System, of which the power is increasing and acting as a counterbalance to struggle against the Institutional System (URA). Following the change of time, the public is paying more and more attention to public affairs.

The objectives of this paper are restated once again as follows:

Objective 1 Find out whether the residents within a renewal project have the

intention to participate in the planning stage of renewal process.

Objective 2 Investigate if the current approaches by URA are effective means to enhance public participation

Objective 1 is fulfilled by questionnaires distributed to the directly affected parties.

By ‘directly affected’, it means residents who are living in properties in Kwun Tong that would be resumed by URA. The questionnaires are set with reference to current URA participatory approaches, with information got from both URA website and interviews with URA official, Housing Society official and Kwun Tong District Councilor. This part, at the same time, provides hindsight for recommendation to better participatory measures in the future.

Objective 2 is carried out by investigating if the target residents find the approaches fulfilling certain aims or not. As for those aims and some features of effective participatory means, literature is referred to. Again, questionnaires are the main way of doing so.

Afterwards, recommendation is made based on the findings, for a better participatory

environment in urban renewal in Hong Kong.

Kwun Tong Town Centre Project is the Case Study for this research. It is a multi-billion-dollar project, being the largest single project undertaken by the URA affecting about, 1600 property interests and about 5,000 people. At present, it is still in the pre-resumption stage, with consultation with the public ongoing. Because of the large scale and complexity involved, the URA emphasizes on local community participation much and would try to make sure the important stakeholders are fully taken into consideration in the project planning process. Added to Kwun Tong Town Centre Project's large scale, it is still in its preliminary stage in the whole urban renewal process. The URA is taking measures to promote the public participation within the area. These qualities all make Kwun Tong Town Centre Project a good choice to be the Case Study.

## 12.2 Implication of the Study

Public participation is a social and empirical phenomenon. This research is trying to look into it in a theoretical way despite its empirical nature. After identifying the present participatory situation in Hong Kong, the URA should search for better means

to promote public participation. To provide a more balanced picture, not only the effectiveness of the measures of URA is explored. At the same time, residents' intention to participate is also a subject of investigation, as stated in Objective 1. Added to the URA's improvement to promote public participation by working on participatory measures, much has to be done to empower and enhance the community ability as well.

### 12.3 Limitation of the Study

#### Data Collection

The first limitation of this study is the quantity of questionnaires successfully analyzed. The target respondents are residents living within the area of Kwun Tong Town Centre Project. To make sure that they understand the questions while answering, each questionnaire was done one by one with further explanations of the questions by the researcher with the respondents. Not many residents were willing to spend time on filling in questionnaires on the street. This distorted the progress of questionnaire filling.

Among all the 80 questionnaires successfully completed by the Kwun Tong target residents, 6 of them were found to be invalid because there were more than one answer for some questions. On some questionnaires, there were unclear marks, which distort the validity. After all, 74 questionnaires are valid and used for analysis. 74 is not a sufficient figure to represent the whole Kwun Tong Town Centre Project, while it is impossible to have all the residents complete the questionnaires.

#### Accuracy of Data

Respondents were asked to choose the rate best representing their thoughts. Yet, different individuals have different attitudes and measurement. Some might be more extreme while some might be mild in giving marks.

In addition, it is unavoidable that some respondents might fill in the questionnaires in a casual manner without thinking carefully. This also distorts the validity of the findings. To minimize the chance of these occurring, respondents were guided while filling in the questionnaires with further elaboration of the questions. Still, there was no way for the researcher to make sure that they were thinking about the best answers seriously and wholeheartedly.

## 12.4 Recommendation for Further Studies

The present public participatory situation is explored by looking into the intention of residents and the effectiveness of the URA's participatory measures. In order to see whether the present situation is satisfactory, comparison can be made. With solely the detailed analysis of the present situation, no conclusion can be drawn. Comparisons of the present with the past, or the future, are to be considered.

### Comparison between the Present and the Past

To find out if the present excels the past is a good way to access if the present is satisfactory. What took place in the past is taken as reference for comparison with the present.

Yet, public participation of urban renewal is not a topic that we can date back to the past. In order to trace back the real participatory situation, affected stakeholders have to be the research target so as to disclose the real picture of whether the institutions did carry out their promise in ensuring participation from the public. Renewal projects taken place a few years ago, such as the Tsuen Wan Town Centre Project taken by

LDC, are now with new buildings. It is absolutely impossible to trace back the affected stakeholders, who are all now scattered around Tsuen Wan, and even other districts. Thus, it is impossible to have comparison of the present with the past.

#### Comparison between the Present and the Future

While the comparison with the past is declared impossible, the future is the only target that we can opt for. Urban renewal projects taken in the future years can be used as reference, so as to facilitate comparison made and to distinguish if the present participatory situation is satisfactory.

The time frame is long for such a comparison to be made, exceeding that of this dissertation research for BSc (Surveying).

This dissertation, thus, can the first half of the whole study logic while the second half is left for further studies.



## Chapter 13

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**Survey of the Realization of Public Participatory Means of URA and Affected Residents' Attitudes towards Urban Renewal – Kwun Tong Town Centre Project**

I am a Surveying final year student from the University of Hong Kong. I am conducting an opinion survey regarding community participation in urban renewal in Hong Kong. The information and opinion given by you will be kept strictly confidential and only be used for aggregate analysis. Thank you for your precious time and cooperation.

**Part 1 - Participatory Measures of URA –Realized?**

Have you heard of the following 5 public participatory measures by URA? These 5 measures are the current means taken by URA in Kwun Tong Town Centre Project, in the hope of enhancing participatory situation in the planning and consultation stage of the renewal work.

	Yes	No
1.District Advisory Group		
2. Community Design Workshop		
3. Neighborhood Community Centre		
4. Consultation Meetings		
5. Community Aspiration Survey		

How do you find it, in the aspect of effectiveness in conveying your own viewpoints to the URA?

(Please put a tick to the most appropriate one)

(1=No effect, 2=Little effect, 3=Moderate, 4=Effective, 5=Very effective)

Appendix I Questionnaire (English Version)

	1	2	3	4	5
6. District Advisory Group					
7. Community Design Workshop					
8. Neighborhood Community Centre					
9. Consultation Meetings					
10. Community Aspiration Survey					

.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
11.	The programmes include ‘visioning’, which is a process providing guides for public actions intended to position the community for the future.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	You feel that you are really being asked to make a contribution to the policy process.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	You disagree that the officials descend from offices into the community to collect and give information.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	You are clear about how your submissions would be processed.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	Interaction between the policy-makers and the public is promoted.	1	2	3	4	5

**Part 2 - Attitude towards the Idea of Participation**

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
16. You are not interested in participating in the planning process.	1	2	3	4	5
17. You are more concerned with financial matters regarding resumption of your property, rather than the planning matter.	1	2	3	4	5
18. You disagree that it is of utmost importance for the affected residents to play a role in the pre-renewal stage.	1	2	3	4	5
19. You are not willing to spend your time to attend consultation activities organized by URA.	1	2	3	4	5
20. You have little confidence to provide valuable advice for the renewal project.	1	2	3	4	5



**Part 3 – Readiness**

.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
21.	You welcome having a stronger relationship with the government, enhancing its future ability to play a significant role in policy-making.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	You agree that participation helps keep authorities honest and perform duties more sensitively.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	You find that the exclusion of the poor from the political system is avoidable.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	Your knowledge about the community is effective for a better planning for it.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	The strengthening of citizens' capacity for self-determination, self-actualization and problem-solving is what you would like to witness in the near future.	1	2	3	4	5

**-The End-**  
**Thank you!**

**市民參與市區重建問卷**  
**市區重建局-觀塘市中心項目**

本人是香港大學房建系三年級學生，現正進行一項有關市民參與市區重建的問卷調查，你的參與對於這個調查有很大的幫助。所以資料及意見絕對保密並只作分析用途。謝謝！

**第一部分--市民參與措施的實現程度**

你有否聽過以下5項市區重建局的市民參與措施？這5項措施是現時市區重建局為了增廣市民參與規劃程序而於觀塘市中心項目實施的措施。

	有	沒有
1. 分區諮詢委員會		
2. 社區工作坊		
3. 社區中心		
4. 諮詢會議		
5. 社區訴求調查		

以下措施能夠有效地協助你傳達意見給市區重建局嗎？請在適當的方格加上✓號：

(1=完全沒有效, 2=有少許效果, 3=中等, 4=有效, 5=非常有效)

	1	2	3	4	5
6. 分區諮詢委員會					
7. 社區工作坊					
8. 社區中心					
9. 諮詢會議					
10. 社區訴求調查					

## Appendix II Questionnaire (Chinese Version)

.		十分 不同意	不同意	無意見	同意	非常 同意
11.	那 5 項措施均包含‘展望’這個元素，意旨引導公眾一起塑造未來社區藍本。	1	2	3	4	5
12.	你真的有份參與詳細規劃的部份。	1	2	3	4	5
13.	“市區重建局官員就像只是把作地點從辦公室設置社區，從而收集及傳遞計劃資料。”這句子不適用。	1	2	3	4	5
14.	你清楚市區重建局對你的意見的處理程序。	1	2	3	4	5
15.	政策推行者與公眾間的互動是存在的。	1	2	3	4	5

### 第二部分- 居民對市民參與的看法

.		十分 不同意	不同意	無意見	同意	非常 同意
16.	你對於這個重建項目的策劃沒多大興趣。	1	2	3	4	5
17.	與策劃程序相比，你較關心賠償問題。	1	2	3	4	5
18.	你不認同受影響居民參與重建規劃的重要性。	1	2	3	4	5
19.	你不想浪費時間出席市區重建局舉辦的諮詢活動。	1	2	3	4	5
20.	你沒多大信心可以提供有用的資料予市區重建局。	1	2	3	4	5

**第三部分- 市民的對於投入市民參與的準備程度**

.		十分 不同意	不同意	無意見	同意	非常 同意
21.	你希望和政府有更強的連繫，令其有更強的能力去策劃將來。	1	2	3	4	5
22.	市民參與可以令機構對市民更誠實，從而更謹慎地推行政策。	1	2	3	4	5
23.	我們是能夠避免低下層被排擠而沒有機會參與政策規劃的。	1	2	3	4	5
24.	你對於居住中的社區的認知對於社區策劃有很大幫助。	1	2	3	4	5
25.	在可望的將來，你希望市民的自主權和解決問題的能力有所提升。	1	2	3	4	5

-問卷完-  
謝謝!

## Appendix III Raw Data from the Respondents

**The number of results got for each question is shown below.**

**Total number of respondents = 74**

Part 1 - Participatory Measures of URA –Realized?

	Yes	No
1.District Advisory Group	33	41
2. Community Design Workshop	33	41
3. Neighborhood Community Centre	43	31
4. Consultation Meetings	40	34
5. Community Aspiration Survey	27	47

How do you find it, in the aspect of effectiveness in conveying your own viewpoints to the URA?

(Please put a tick to the most appropriate one)

(1=No effect, 2=Little effect, 3=Moderate, 4=Effective, 5=Very effective)

	1	2	3	4	5
6. District Advisory Group	21	21	21	7	4
7. Community Design Workshop	26	20	18	9	1
8. Neighborhood Community Centre	28	19	22	5	0
9. Consultation Meetings	25	10	19	15	5
10. Community Aspiration Survey	22	21	17	10	4

.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
11.	The programmes include 'visioning', which is a process providing guides for public actions intended to position the	4	17	32	19	2

### Appendix III Raw Data from the Respondents

	community for the future.					
12.	You feel that you are really being asked to make a contribution to the policy process.	15	30	17	11	1
13.	You disagree that the officials descend from offices into the community to collect and give information.	4	21	33	12	4
14.	You are clear about how your submissions would be processed.	11	38	11	12	2
15.	Interaction between the policy-makers and the public is promoted.	9	29	22	13	1

### **Part 2 - Attitude towards the Idea of Participation**

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
16. You are not interested in participating in the planning process.	5	27	23	18	1
17. You are more concerned with financial matters regarding resumption of your property, rather than the planning matter.	4	12	16	31	11
18. You disagree that it is of utmost importance for the affected residents to play a role in the pre-renewal stage.	8	28	21	13	4
19. You are not willing to spend your time to attend consultation activities organized by URA.	1	20	20	23	10

20. You have little confidence to provide  
valuable advice for the renewal project.      2      13      21      26      12

### **Part 3 – Readiness**

.		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
21.	You welcome having a stronger relationship with the government, enhancing its future ability to play a significant role in policy-making.	1	3	25	35	10
22.	You agree that participation helps keep authorities honest and perform duties more sensitively.	1	7	19	39	8
23.	You find that the exclusion of the poor from the political system is avoidable.	4	19	31	18	2
24.	Your knowledge about the community is effective for a better planning for it.	1	14	22	33	4
25.	The strengthening of citizens' capacity for self-determination, self-actualization and problem-solving is what you would like to witness in the near future.	1	3	22	36	12

## Appendix IV

Map showing the boundary of Kwun Tong Town Centre Project (enclosed in pink)

